

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JULY 1924.

BISMARCK AT HOME, 1885.

BY THE ARCHDEACON OF ST. ALBANS.

LATE in the autumn of 1885 Prince Bismarck expressed a wish that my father, who was President of the Bimetallic League, should come and talk to him about bimetallism, so on October 16 he started for Germany, taking my sister and me with him for a month's holiday abroad.

On the way I got my first lesson as to the value of an official *démenti*, for we found in *The Times* for that morning the following notice: 'We are authorised to contradict the report that Mr. Henry Hucks Gibbs has had an interview with Prince Bismarck.' This had been inserted without my father's knowledge, and it was just barely in time to be verbally true! It was probably inserted by the German Embassy, for when my father reached the station at Friedrichsruh he was given a message from Bismarck suggesting that he should come under an assumed name, as there would be another guest at luncheon. The Prince was, I think, the author of the saying that he never believed anything till it had been officially denied!

At Hamburg we found a telegram from Bismarck saying that he had ordered that the 11 o'clock express should stop at Friedrichsruh next morning, so leaving my sister at Hamburg, we went by that train and, shining with the reflected glory of the great man, we were seen into a reserved compartment by many bowing officials. My father expected an interview of about an hour, and I intended to remain at the station till he came back, but when we reached our destination we found Bismarck's son-in-law, Count Ranzau, waiting on the platform, and he kindly pressed me to come up to the house. I refused, thinking that I should be very much in the way, and Ranzau said, 'Ah, I see, you want a proper invitation from the Princess; you are quite right, I will go and get it!'

Accordingly he and my father drove off to the house, which was only about three hundred yards from the station, and very soon he came back with the 'proper invitation' and all was well. He took me straight to the library, and as I went in he announced me as 'the prodigal son.' Bismarck was at the end of a long room, and I can

see him now, a tremendous figure, very tall and very large, standing up and laughing at the introduction and holding out his hand, with his two great Danish hounds, one on each side of him.

He was most kind and friendly, and just as I came in he was expatiating to my father on the determination of the French to fight in 1870 with or without reason, and above all to crow!

At 12 o'clock we had a large and long meal, including smoked goose and other delights. My father sat next Princess Bismarck, who was very pleasant but not able to speak much English, and after luncheon, when the cigars were handed round, he asked her whether she minded his smoking, on which Bismarck roared out 'Why, she smokes herself!' This was in 1885, when it was very unusual for a lady to smoke, so a vigorous effort was made by his daughter to induce him to behave properly; but he took no notice of her repeated and reproachful cries of 'Father! she doesn't! Father!' and shouted 'She does, she does, in her bedroom she does!' It turned out that the poor lady suffered from asthma, and smoked medicated cigarettes to relieve it.

Besides the family there was Herr Lindau from the Foreign Office at Berlin, who was evidently quite at home and possibly held some official position with the Chancellor. He spoke English excellently and told me that he sometimes wrote articles for Blackwood. There was also, as we had been warned, another visitor besides ourselves. We understood that he was the Ober-Präsident of a province, and he left before luncheon was over. Bismarck seemed much annoyed with him, and told us that he had insisted on coming, but had really nothing to say which he could not have written on half a sheet of note-paper, and had only come in order to be able to say that he had dined with the Chancellor.

'You will understand,' Bismarck added, 'that in everything but name I am King of Germany, but I have not all the privileges of a King and I cannot simply say I am not disposed to receive so-and-so.' It appeared, however, that even the most pressing visitors sometimes failed to get in, for Bismarck told us the following story:

'A man called and sent in word that he wanted to see me, and I said that he couldn't. He then sent in to say that he must see me, and I said that he shouldn't; and he sent in a third time to say that if he did not see me he should go and hang himself on one of the trees, and I told the servant to find a rope and lend it to him!'

As we sat down to luncheon I asked Countess Ranzau whether the bread that lay between us was hers or mine, and she said that

she never ate bread, and added, with rather embarrassing frankness, 'You see, I am very fat and you are very thin, and between us we should just about make two ordinary people.'

The Prince was interesting about the estate at Friedrichsruh :

'It was given me,' he said, 'by the King my master'—that was his constant phrase for the old Emperor William—'he gave it to me after the Franco-German War, and chose this particular place as his gift because he knew my love for trees. There are 25,000 acres, and as I cannot spend my revenues I am able to keep it all in good condition.'

He offered to take us for a drive in the woods in the afternoon, and when my father said that we ought to be going, they pressed us to stay till after dinner, and told us that an express would be passing through the station between 9 and 10, and that they would order it to be stopped and take us back to Hamburg.

Then we were taken up to rest for an hour, each in a separate sitting-room, but as soon as their backs were turned I joined my father in his room, as I felt an urgent need to crow to somebody over this entirely unexpected and amazingly interesting experience.

When the time came for our drive, what they called a Pomeranian mist was falling and Bismarck made us each put on one of his light great-coats ; I hope they reached his heels, for on us they trailed and we had to hold them up when we got out, as we did from time to time, to look at one of his favourite trees. There were two carriages ; Ranzau and Lindau came in the second with me, and in the first Bismarck and my father had their bimetallic talk, and the latter told me afterwards that he was greatly impressed with Bismarck's full and accurate knowledge of this complicated subject in all its bearings.

During luncheon and dinner, and indeed all through the day, Bismarck talked freely about personages and politics both English and European. Whenever he mentioned the old Emperor, he spoke with respect and, I think, with affection. The Crown Prince and Princess were not mentioned, but we asked what sort of man young Prince William was, and Bismarck said that he was 'a nice young man, a *very* nice young man.' It would seem that he had in 1885 no prevision of the day so very near at hand when the 'very nice young man' would succeed to the throne and soon afterwards come to the conclusion that there was not room Unter den Linden for a young Emperor and a very clever old man who could speak of himself as 'in all but name King of Germany.'

Bismarck mentioned Queen Victoria with deference, and he talked of Beaconsfield with admiration and affection. He told us

that he had three houses, and that in each of his three libraries he had a picture of Lord Beaconsfield.

He spoke as if he despised and disliked Gladstone, and talked of his 'extraordinary follies' in the Soudan and blamed him for the death of General Gordon.

Of Chamberlain he said, 'I do not like your Mr. Chamberlain, and now that my son Herbert has sent me a photograph of him, I have formed a worse opinion of him than ever, he looks so impertinent. I wish Dilke had come to the front instead.'

He asked my father what we in England thought of his action about the Caroline Islands, and what he called the 'foolish fuss' with Spain, and my father said that it was thought to have been very clever, and Bismarck laughed and said 'I think it was, especially my asking the Pope to arbitrate, and the more so because his decision is of no importance to me whatever.' There had been an article, I think, in the *Spectator*, a week or two before, suggesting that Bismarck had got up the whole trouble in order to give himself the opportunity of making a friendly gesture to the Pope.

He also spoke of the Bulgarian troubles, and I remember how he thumped on the table with his great fist and said 'I shall not allow these petty tribes to disturb the peace; I want peace, and it is not to be borne that some two million sheep-stealing ruffians should disturb the millions of Europe—it is impertinence.' Probably he was the one man in the world who could have said that tremendous 'I shall not allow' without being guilty of empty boasting.

The frankness or apparent frankness of his talk was surprising, but it was a cynical saying of his that it was just as cheap to tell the truth as to tell lies, and quite as effective, for the truth is never believed in diplomacy. Another saying of his which impressed me, though I do not remember the context, was 'In matters of national policy I never put down my right foot till I know where I am going to put my left; that is a lesson which I learnt in my youth in the Pomeranian marshes.'

At dinner we each had, I think, seven wine-glasses and at least one tumbler, and I drank nothing but water! My host noticed and deplored this, and though he courteously tolerated it he could not refrain from a slight outburst against what he called the temperance craze in England, and against the fanatical attacks on moderate drinking. It is recorded of him that at one time he did his moderate drinking in large glasses of champagne and porter mixed, and that once Moltke gave him a sort of punch made of champagne, hot tea, and sherry.

After dinner we all went into the drawing-room, and there everyone shook hands and we wished each other a blessing on the meal—an old German custom, they told us. Then we sat down, and all the Germans, including the ladies, drank beer. Princess Bismarck brought us some of her husband's big cigars and lighted them for us, and the big man himself smoked a pipe three feet long with a very large china bowl. He spoke with regret of the good time when he used to be able to smoke large cigars all day long, lighting the first as soon as he woke up and before he got out of bed; but the doctor had forbidden cigars, and all smoking, till after dinner, and then allowed only four pipes. 'So,' said Bismarck, 'I sent for the largest pipe I could buy.' 'Yes,' said his daughter, 'and if I don't watch you very closely you have five of them instead of four.'

Bismarck was in great spirits all the evening, laughing and talking and chaffing everybody. He wanted to know whether I was married, and said that as a clergyman of the Church of England I ought to be; both he and the Princess quoted passages from the 'Vicar of Wakefield' in support of that view; it was surprising to hear him pouring out the 'Vicar of Wakefield' as if he knew the whole book by heart. He told us that it was always the first English book which a German was set to read. My father said that his sons were idle about getting married, and I answered that if only he had forbidden us to marry we should probably have done it long ago; on which Bismarck said 'Ah! I see it is a case of obstination in the family: your father will have his way with me about bimetalism and you are obstinate with him—father and son!' 'Obstination' was one of the very few mistakes I heard him make, for his command of the English language was remarkable. His accent was not bad and his vocabulary was very good. One other little verbal slip he made when a dish of mince and eggs was being handed round and he pressed my father to take an egg, on the ground that he would find it 'very convenient' with the mince. Many things might be truly said of a soft poached egg in that position, but 'convenient' is not, I think, one of them.

A reference to 'David Copperfield' by Countess Ranzau amused us. She had a little boy sitting on her lap, and I asked her if she had a daughter. 'No,' she said, 'but before this little boy was born I made up my mind that it would be a little girl; but it was a boy, and "Betsey Trotwood" never came!'

Bismarck's two great hounds never left him except when he went to see the Emperor. The elder of the two sat staring at us for some time and then walked solemnly across the room, licked our hands,

and walked back to her master. He was much interested and said that he had never known her make friendly advances to a stranger before. They were, he said, inclined to be savage, and no one, not even a member of his own family, dared touch them unless he first gave an order to the dog. They slept in his room, and when his wife and daughter came in to say good-night to him after he was in bed the great dog always got up from its sleeping place and stood by the bed to protect him. He also told us that he liked to go out at night for a walk in the dark, and that the two dogs were better protection for him than a guard of soldiers.

In the course of the evening he sent for a large English dictionary, and announced that he was going to prove to my father that he did not know his own language. It was lucky that he did not select me for the experiment, for he found a quantity of dictionary words most of which I had never heard, but my father, who had a remarkably retentive memory, and had been correcting the proofs of the Oxford Dictionary for years, told Bismarck what all the words meant and all about them. At the end of twenty minutes Bismarck shut the book up with a slam, and said 'I give you my word you are the first man I ever met who knew his own language, and I have done this to almost every foreigner who has spent any time in my house.'

He complained very much of the growing habit of printing German books in the Roman alphabet; he said that he could only read them with difficulty, and that when they were printed in the German alphabet he could run his eye over the page and tell at a glance whether he wanted to read it or not, while in the other alphabet he had to read every word to find out whether they were worth reading.

Soon after 9 o'clock we left, and Bismarck gave us each a signed photograph and asked us each to send him two photographs, one for him and one for the Princess.

Ranzau and Lindau came to the station to see us off, and the latter told me that latterly Bismarck had refused to receive even Germans if he could possibly avoid it, and that foreigners were as a rule absolutely barred; also that with the exception of Beaconsfield and a few personal friends he had not at any time been willing to receive Englishmen, and that it was almost certain that there were not five living Englishmen to whom he had given his photograph. Lindau was, I think, unfeignedly surprised at the great friendliness with which we had been entertained and at the length of time that Bismarck had kept us with him. Bismarck was, I suppose, at that time the most interesting personality in the world, and we were undeniably fortunate.

ON FOOT TO MARKET BOSWORTH: A JOHNSON
PILGRIMAGE.

Julii 16. Bosvortiam pedes petii. Such is the extract, under the year 1732, well known to readers of Boswell. It is from one of the little fragments of a diary rescued by the good negro Francis Barber from the mass of papers committed to the flames by his master during those last days. Though an insignificant episode in the life of Dr. Johnson as a whole, his brief ushership at the Grammar School of Market Bosworth is of peculiar interest to lovers of the doctor. For that circle, too, it has added another place of pilgrimage to those which give such varied life to the byways of our British landscape, and it had long been the intention of the writer to tramp with the shade of the young usher some 16th of July (old style) on his walk from Lichfield to Market Bosworth. Not until the 27th day of July 1922 was it accomplished, for to be pedantically accurate I had added the eleven days due to the alteration of the calendar.

From familiarity with the mere text of Boswell, I fancied for a long time that the above entry had reference to Johnson's first setting forth from Lichfield 'in the forlorn state of his circumstances' to take up his situation as usher in the Market Bosworth school. But by later reference to dates and annotators it became clear on the other hand that he was on his way to terminate the hated engagement. Malone cites a letter of Johnson's to a friend, dated July 27, 1732, saying that he had then recently left Market Bosworth, and as this is only eleven days after the extract from the diary it is plain that Johnson has been at the school at least for some months before the recorded walk on the 16th of that month. When coupled with that other entry in the diary only the day before, that he had then received twenty pounds, all that was to come to him from his father's estate, we may suppose that Sam was returning to Bosworth after the summer vacation, or after some brief leave of absence to wind up his father's affairs. In any event the young scholar was not on the road that summer day under any of the hopes incident to a new and untried situation. All the misery of it was clearly known, and possibly the jingling of that twenty pounds in his pocket had inspired the courage to throw off the intolerable.

bondage, or gave the sudden impulse to it on his arrival at the school.

It is an old and familiar story, but there are few more pathetic records in the history of letters than those early years of struggle with adversity and constitutional infirmity which clouded the career of Samuel Johnson. Indeed, as we know, the whole of his life till fifty-three was a struggle of the bitterest kind ; but adversity is never quite so sad as when it overclouds the buoyant years of youth, and robs that golden time of its birthright of joy and hope in the wondrous world upon which it has been launched. Those few months of ushership at Bosworth school assuredly touch the lowest depths of Johnson's wretchedness. As he himself would have said later, he had not yet learned how to manage it. 'His general aversion to this painful drudgery,' says Boswell, 'was greatly enhanced by a disagreement between him and Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of the school, in whose house I have been told he officiated as a kind of domestic chaplain, so far at least as to say grace at table, but was treated with what he represented as intolerable harshness ; and after suffering for a few months such complicated misery, he relinquished a situation which all his life afterwards he recollected with the strongest aversion and even a degree of horror.' To no other episode in the whole of his career were such words ever applied. Even of the Oxford days which immediately preceded this we have no such account. They are usually considered tragical enough, with their worn-out shoes through which the feet appeared and various other grim humiliations, with reference to which 'the gay and frolicsome fellow' of Dr. Adams's recollection had to supply the comment 'Ah, sir, I was mad and violent. It was bitterness which they mistook for frolic. I was miserably poor and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit, so I disregarded all power and all authority.' But even this left no permanent sting. We know how he loved to meet with any of the associates of his youth there, and how he cherished any spot with which his early days were connected. Nothing gave Johnson fuller joy than to go back to Oxford at any period of his life. He loved Pembroke and everything about it. When a degree was granted in mature years to grace the title-page of his Dictionary, on all subsequent visits to Oxford we are told that he prided himself on being accurately academic in all points, and he wore his gown almost ostentatiously. Obviously no clouds lingered here. But in spite

of the rectory there being eventually the benefice of his friend Dr. Taylor, we never hear of his paying another visit to Market Bosworth, or, with this solitary exception of Taylor, of his ever having intercourse with a single individual associated with the place.

These things I pondered for an hour in the old house in the Market Place before setting forth. Here the child Samuel was born, and here the young man of twenty-two would take leave of his widowed mother and Kitty Chambers that very morning, all but two hundred years ago. His brother Nathaniel was probably not at home, for the two were not on good terms, and bookselling journeys would facilitate the younger's absence whilst Samuel was at hand. Though the house, except for its contents, is so little altered, the open Market Place on which I looked through the heavily framed old windows presented a very different appearance from that shown in eighteenth-century prints. The church of St. Mary with its spire and other changes is virtually a fresh structure, whilst in place of the market cross sits the great doctor himself, and listening not far away the erect, pert figure of his immortal biographer. As little did the poor usher foresee the effect which that grim life of his was to have on his physical appearance as on that of his native place when he passed down those few steps to the pavement and waved a parting adieu to his mother watching him from the doorway. It was not the figure made so familiar to us by later eminence that was taking its departure there, but a lean, lank, and bony youth of whose aspect we have nothing short of formidable accounts. But worst of all the heart was heavy. It was July heat and a twenty-two or -three mile walk before him, with Market Bosworth and Sir Wolstan Dixie at the end of it. Nor was there a spark of interest in the landscape to lighten and beguile the way for him. Not that the mere walk would trouble him, for we know that in the effort to combat his melancholy humours by violent exertion he would often walk from Lichfield to Birmingham and back, a distance by many miles greater than that before him now.

At all events I could only hope that the elements at least were as favourable to him as they were to me that day. Mine was the very day for a walk. Grey rain of the night before had turned to sunlit clouds sailing before a north-west breeze, which brought into the old city the fragrant breath of Cannock Chase without any hint of its coal. All was genial summer air. The glorious minster spires pierced heaven's purest blue, against which the swifts were

wheeling, whilst the swallows skimmed the minster pool below. But even on such a morning, with surroundings so much more picturesque than now, none of this would have touched the heart of the poor scholar as he set forth on his dispiriting tramp. In later life at all events he would suffer no talk of fine prospects, and his youth was a full century too early for any benefit from that influence which—

‘laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth.’

It is true, in middle life the lexicographer could write buoyantly from Fleet Street, in acceptance of an invitation to the country from his young friend Langton, that ‘I shall delight to hear the ocean roar, or see the stars twinkle, in the company of men to whom nature does not spread her volumes or utter her voice in vain’; but when could the dear doctor resist a fine period on whatever side of his argument it lay? No, no, nature uttered no voice, and spread no volume, to Samuel Johnson at any time of his life. The ‘soothing voice’ which was first to loose our hearts, as Matthew Arnold puts it, had, even when Johnson died, only the piping tone of a lad of thirteen, and was still merely shouting to comrades on the ice, or holloaing to the owls around Hawkshead. A full half-century must yet elapse before it had power to work that magic on our souls claimed for it by the later poet. Then we awoke.

‘The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o’er the sunlit fields again;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
Our youth return’d; for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furl’d,
The freshness of the early world.’

But my hour was up and I set forth. There was nothing to help in deciding on my route. Inquiry brought no traditional way of going from Lichfield to Bosworth, and old road books afforded no help beyond the obvious stage to Tamworth. So, guided by the ordnance map, I merely chose what appeared the most direct byway from village to village, and in the course of my walk came to the conclusion that there could be little doubt of my having got the right road. There might have been a little choice once or twice, but with no material difference in distance I felt safe in supposing

that Sam would avoid a hill. To those impatient of our industrial developments, the first half at least of the walk would prove a severe trial. Refuge may be found, however, in reconstructing the landscape to the state in which young Johnson saw it, and in recalling the numberless associations of the historic district. His old city itself fortunately retains much of its delightfully old-world character. Many of the houses are exactly as Johnson saw (or was unable to see) them as he turned the two corners that would bring him to St. John Street and so to the main Tamworth road. His old Grammar School was there, part of which remains, and exactly opposite, the fine old Hospital or Almshouses for the sheltering of thirteen honest poor men. Then round the knoll called Borrowcop Hill and away to the more or less open country.

The rise to Whittington Heath must have been delightful in those old days, looking down to the cathedral spires, 'the ladies of the vale,' and the well-wooded undulating landscape around. The heath itself is now unhappily possessed by extensive military barracks, but it smells heathy still, and was a very real wild heath once, as can be seen from what is left of its sadly outraged surface. A wilderness then of broom and gorse and bracken, with heather-bells, foxgloves, tall spires of rose-bay, purple betony, yellow toad-flax, and what not, sprinkled amongst that lovely pink fairy moorland grass which still clings to its sandy soil where not too hopelessly defiled. But the contamination here is nothing to what you meet in a few miles, after dropping from the fine woods of Packington Hall and Hopwas Hays to the level approach to Tamworth. By the roadside here comes a huge paper factory, with unsightly acres of piled-up refuse paper in bundles, rotting there for years whilst awaiting repulping I suppose. From this festering heap the winds tear what they will, and whirl the fragments, sodden and obscene, into every nettle-filled ditch and hedgerow for a mile around.

Hurry on, therefore, and call up the shade of the great mistress of Mercia, the Lady Ethelfleda, the greater Alfred's daughter, to help you over the next few miles. Not until her town of Tamworth is passed and the colliery village of Polesworth reached can you breathe again. These two places are parted by a hill over which the road passes, and which is wholly given up to the production of coal, tiles, and drain-pipes. Necessary products, no doubt, but the locality is aptly characterised to-day by the names attached to the ignoble rows of workers' dwellings, two of which I saw being MAIN

ROAD and ENGINE LANE—inspiring addresses both, surely, for any home. But there happily remains even from these a fine wide view of a truly English landscape which so seldom fails us, and to survey it you may sit on one of the lichened old milestones which still stand along these roads, and look venerable enough to have been standing since Johnson passed and wearily counted them. Perhaps at Polesworth bridge below he paused to look into the water, not at the first one crossing the Coventry canal, for neither canal nor bridge was there then, but on the other brick one, a few yards away, which at the foot of the village spans the sluggish little river Anker as it meanders here and there amongst the meadows. Indeed, he might conceivably have crossed this bridge, and passing through the village of Polesworth have taken the road by Orton on the Hill to Bosworth. But on the whole I decided against it. Except for the extremely interesting village of Polesworth itself and the charm of little Orton, I could not see any advantage. And the usher was in no mood that day for delight in quaint old cottages or remains of ancient nunneries however impressive or picturesque. No, he went straight forward, not pausing again till Grendon Hall was at hand, where once more he comes to a bridge over the little Anker, still wandering so aimlessly through the land. Here I especially lamented for his own sake the young scholar's bad sight and obliviousness of natural surroundings. For, even on such a depressing errand, so sweet a spot must have brought him a few minutes' respite. Nothing at all grand or romantic, to be sure, but just that placid sense of home breathed so benignly from a typical bit of English scenery. The hall and grey church tower back amidst majestic trees, from which even so late in the summer a thrush and two blackbirds were still singing divinely. Over the bridge you look at the greenest of green meadows from which the hay has been gathered, and round it comes the little river under alder and willow trees with spikes of purple loosestrife on its banks, flowing you know not how, for most of its surface is a glorious tangle of yellow water-lilies with their plates of leaves, arrowheads, and reeds, amongst which the moorhens lurk and pipe so weirdly. To complete it all, just above the bank, stands the home farmhouse, with its gables of mellow old brick, ivy-grown, and its imperturbable air of life at the very heart of things.

At any rate, as he set forth again the usher would feel that a good half of his walk was over. The remainder of the way is of a somewhat different character, and is to-day possibly more altered

from what it was than the tract already traversed. In about two miles we meet a cross road coming up from the great highway of Watling Street, and leading travellers northwards by Twycross to Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Burton-on-Trent. Here again Johnson might have turned and gone by way of Sheepy to Bosworth, but once more I concluded he went straight on for the villages of Ratcliffe Culey, Sibson, and Shenton before mounting the little hill on which Market Bosworth stands. If he did, and if he looked and could see so far, the hated eminence crowned with its little church spire would very soon be seen rising in the east beyond the level lands at a distance of six or seven miles away. There lay his destination, with which probably he had already decided to sever his connexion for ever, and shake the dust of the place with horror from his feet, or was at any rate within a day or two of coming to such decision. To him no doubt the rest of the way would be peculiarly lone and desolate, for I should suppose that most of it was at that time boggy, unenclosed, and uncultivated land, haunted by the heron, snipe, and bittern, whose voices would bring appropriate wail to the ears of the usher. A stately heron rose up even for me to-day from the side of the Sence Brook below Sibson, and sailed away in that calm, majestic flight of his, bringing at once a singular dignity to the landscape.

The beautiful brown, sandy road showed the nature of the soil, and the wide rushy margins to it, with the rectangular inclosures beyond, spoke of comparatively recent agricultural improvements. At one point, indeed, came a particularly interesting illustration of the change, for side by side, parted only by the open meandering brook, lay the startling contrast of old and new. On one side, up to the very water's edge, so flat that there was scarce a bank, spread a tract of the coarsest, boggiest pasture, fit only for ducks and geese, overspread with rushes, reeds, and flags, yellow ragwort and bedstraw blossoming rankly. On the other side, equally level, all this by drainage and husbandry had been turned into a brilliantly green meadow of weedless grass, the thatched haystack from which stood fragrant and golden by the gate. But that old wild tangle was not all of the ranker weeds, as the hedges and ditches still show. In these are lingering many of the wild-flowers that everybody loves. Round the bushes of bramble, gorse, and that late wild summer rose, so flat and orange centred, rise the noble willow-herbs, rose-bay and codlins-and-cream, together with valerian, meadow-sweet, St. John's wort, rest-harrow, and those beautiful climbers the yellow

vetchling and deep blue tufted vetch, to name no others. It is sad that beauty and utility are so constantly at war. Even of our glorious tangled hedgerows we are at last to be deprived by our too scrupulous farmers and road surveyors. But happily you still may find a few neglected byways if you are bold enough to penetrate to unfrequented spots, by roads which remain lanes, showing by their surface, not tar or coal dust, but the beautiful colours of the local stone and soil, and by their margins and stacks of hedges the lovely shrubs and flowers we are doomed to lose.

But the day was far advanced and the usher's destination was at hand. Clouds had thrown their shadows over the landscape from time to time, carrying even showers in places, but these had kept mostly to the north, over that rugged tract of Charnwood Forest, and never came to me. By now the sky had composed itself to one of gorgeous cumuli with carved heads smitten by the sun, and behind them on the purest blue were dashed lovely flecks of spray and dapple and streaming goats' hair. Flocks of rooks and jackdaws would noisily fling themselves into the breeze on their way to that little hill in the east which was the old slaughter ground of Bosworth Field. Thoughts of that grim event would probably occur to Johnson and with it some consolatory scene from Shakespeare. In literature, at all events, he always had found solace, and in addition to solace some subtle stimulus which he would not yet quite understand. Coupling this lurking sense of uncommon powers with the intolerable irksomeness of his position, may he not have pored for some minutes over one of these stagnant ponds coated with duckweed, and in muttering to himself the poet's 'green mantle of the standing pool' have resolved that, come what may, there should be in his own case some movement of the waters?

At all events, from the beautiful little hamlet of Shenton, on a bank above its tree-buried stream, Johnson would begin his last ascent to Market Bosworth. In passing he could scarcely avoid a glance at the fine old brick Shenton Hall with its

W.W.
1629

 over the arched gatehouse. In the next two miles he had to rise nearly three hundred feet, so he would take it leisurely. I myself certainly did so, and in the ascent recalled the fact that on that very day of Johnson's walk, called the 16th of July in those days, a little boy of nine, by name Joshua Reynolds, was happily celebrating his own birthday away at Plympton in Devonshire, already drawing eagerly,

or poring over some problem in perspective, and little thinking of that sad and lonely usher on Bosworth hill whom the course of years was to turn into one of his dearest friends. The usher on his part was equally ignorant of the little boy, and was no doubt sufficiently occupied with thoughts of Sir Wolstan Dixie. Evidently there lay the sting in the situation. There seems no record of how Johnson was housed whilst at Market Bosworth. Surely not under the very roof of Bosworth Hall. Yet Boswell tells us that the usher acted as a kind of chaplain there, at least to the extent of saying grace at meals. We must presume that he partook of the meals for which he said the grace, however far below the salt he was seated. That it was very far below we may be certain, and equally sure that the food was made bitter by some display of supercilious contempt, or the poor scholar would never have complained of intolerable harshness, or have recalled the situation with a sense of lifelong horror. The mere drudgery of the school would not be likely to inspire such acute pain. But of these few months of complicated misery there seem to be no further facts. In the quiet little town, with the hall and great deer-park up to its very streets, the old school itself still stands and flourishes, and is, I believe, not unmindful of its famous usher. In wandering there in the sunset it was interesting to recall the later association of Johnson's schoolfellow and lifelong friend, Dr. Taylor, with the rectory of the place. Whether Johnson's association with the school had anything to do with Taylor's acquisition of the valuable living I can't say. But it seems not improbable. In the 'Dictionary of National Biography' it is stated that Taylor 'was thought' to have got the rich living by purchase from the Dixies, and that Taylor was affluent we know. It is quite possible, or even likely, that the knowledge of the Dixies gained by Johnson may have led him to suggest to Taylor to treat for this benefice. Dr. Taylor, it is said, was presented to the rectory on 14th August 1740 by Sir Wolstan Dixie on the death of Beaumont Dixie, and held it till his death in 1788. But, of course, the presentation would not preclude the supposition of some valuable consideration undisclosed, a transaction which we know would offer no difficulty to the conscience of this particular divine.

Not knowing where to follow the unhappy usher to his resting-place, I decided to leave him wandering amongst the last golden sunbeams in the park. By the side of that beautiful old mansion with its great iron scroll-work gates, all those eighteenth-century figures became very clear. Amongst the most despised of its

inhabitants of that little town that night was Samuel Johnson, as despicable, it is to be feared, to himself as to any others. Though mere despair had driven him to relinquish his situation here, it was still far from inspiring him with any more hopeful course of life. Thoughts of friend Hector over in Birmingham, forging consistently ahead towards his career as a physician, no doubt haunted him uneasily, and drew him as a next step for very refuge in that direction. Hopeful companionship, at least, was there, and in the wider scene of life possibly some fresh suggestion. A few days more and he was gone. I myself lingered there in the park a little longer. Before the last thrush had finished his song an owl was hooting under the lovely twilight sky, and I wondered how so jubilant a shout could have gathered such ill omens about it.

ALGERNON GISSING.

'TUAN CAN-DO.'¹

BY BOYD CABLE.

I.

It can hardly be wondered at if 'Tuan Can-Do,' a particularly energetic and hurry-up type of Westerner, was irked even more than usual by the easy-going ways of the East as he watched the Dutch-Javanese official on the Sourabaya quay examining his passport, health certificate, and other papers.

Tuan Can-Do was racing to catch a steamer that lay out at anchor somewhere in the darkness of the roadstead, had been on the point of jumping into a sampan to row out, knowing it was touch and go whether he could catch her, when the official halted him with a demand for his papers. He had only just whirled into the port after a desperate and continuous effort of half a day and a night, of physical and mental strain, of returning a dogged 'Can-do' to every attempt to persuade him he couldn't make it, that the boat sailed at daybreak, that there was no train to Sourabaya by then, that it was too far by road to reach in time.

He had done it by road, and arriving on the bare edge of daybreak, dusty and dirty, hungry, thirsty, stiff and sore, but triumphant that after all he was going to win through, you may imagine his feelings as he watched the official glance through the papers, hunt out spectacles, adjust them to a nicety, and settle himself as comfortably to read as if he had all day before him to do it.

Can-Do couldn't speak Dutch, but he jumped to the office door and dragged in his driver, who could.

'Here, Frantz, tell this slow-motion movie star that I'm in a red-hot hurry. Tell him I must catch this *Van Heemskirk* boat.'

Frantz interpreted this, and the answer 'He say all ri'. Say *Van Heemskirk* sail at daybreak.'

Can-Do snorted impatiently. 'Say, ask him if he thinks that's news. Tell him I've been hearing little else from one end of Java to the other for the last twenty-four hours. Say that I know it, and it's darn near daybreak now.'

Frantz translated this, but the Dutchman merely nodded and continued his careful perusal of the papers.

¹ Copyright in U.S.A., 1924, by Boyd Cable.

'Frantz,' said Can-Do desperately, 'he doesn't savvy how important this is to me. Tell him I've risked breaking my neck, to say nothing of all the auto-speed records in Java, to get here by daybreak. Tell him it's life and death to me to catch that boat, it's make or break, sink or swim, for me to be in Singapore by the twenty-fifth, and this is the only boat out of Java can get me there by then. Rub it into him.'

When Frantz interpreted the reply to all this, Can-Do came near to doing bodily violence.

'He say nex' boat from Batavia in few days.'

Can-Do gritted his teeth. 'He doesn't savvy. Make him savvy, Frantz. Batavia boat's no good to me. I must go on this *Van Heemskirk* to get in by the twenty-fifth. Tell him I shudder to think how many pounds, dollars, and guilders, time and energy I've spent, and how many hundreds of miles I've travelled on this special bit of business I can only do if I get there by the twenty-fifth. And I miss it all if I miss this *Van Heemskirk*.'

Frantz translated at length, but hesitated a little over giving the Dutchman's answer.

'He say,' he murmured deprecatingly in answer to Can-Do's demand, '*Van Heemskirk* sail daybreak.'

Can-Do glared. 'Sufferin' cats! I've heard that so often I'm beginning to think it's the Javanese National Anthem.'

He broke off as he saw the official gather the papers, and after carefully selecting and testing a pen-nib, begin to copy entries from the papers into his books. Can-Do jumped to the door and had another look at the sky, which by now he was certain was beginning to lighten. The situation was critical. He had in no-wise exaggerated his urgent need to get to Singapore by the twenty-fifth. Besides his special and important business there, he had a private affair, no less urgent and important, and connected with a lady who might pass on from there, and from his life, after that date.

But it was not for nothing that 'Tuan Can-Do' had earned the name by which he was known from the outer fringe of the waterfront to as far inland as the 'pidgin' runs—the 'Tuan' being merely a word for chief, sir, my lord, or some such native courtesy title, and the 'Can-Do' a recognition of the word so often on his lips and the root principle in his nature of refusing to accept a 'No-can' to any proposal, of insisting that 'Can-do' applied to anything he wanted done or that he wanted to do.

He had learned in Java many of the ways of 'Can-do' and the short cuts to it from 'No-can,' and he took one of these now. He

produced several bank notes, taking care the official should see them as he passed them to Frantz.

'Here,' he said, 'keep these until my sampan comes back. If it has put me aboard, give this fellow the lot. If I miss the boat, he misses this *persen*. Savvy?'

Both of them savvied so thoroughly that the books shut with a snap, the papers were handed over, and Can-Do at last hurried out to the sampan that waited him with a double crew of picked men. He jumped in and called back to Frantz, 'Tell them it's double pay if they get me aboard. What is that Dutch streak o' lightning saying to 'em about the *Van Heemskirk* now?'

'He say Tuan mus' catch *Van Heemskirk*. Say *Van Heemskirk* sail at daybreak.'

Can-Do yelled at him. 'I do believe I've heard that remark somewhere before. Now, you sampan-men, speed her up. *Allez, jildi, hastag*, hustle!'

As the boat was pushing off and pulling round, Frantz shouted after him: 'Tell them *pigi—pigi lekas*! That mean all same "Go on—go on quick." You savvy, Tuan, *pigi—pigi lekas*!'

'I savvy,' replied Can-Do. 'And I'll see it's made the motto and the family crest on this craft for the voyage. Hup then, you things. *Pigi—pigi lekas*!'

The sampan sped swiftly down the river fairway, along the lane of crowded barges and boats, shot out into the open roadstead, swung round and went surging along under the impetus of the quick oar-strokes and the newly turned tide. There were three men at the oars—fine, powerfully built men with deep chests and heavily muscled arms and shoulders—and one man steering, while two others crouched in the bows. The rowers sat on little stools raised only a few inches from the bottom floor of the boat, with one foot drawn up half under them and the other stretched out and pressing against a block that gave them purchase for their pull. Coming down the river they sat on the seats pulling with quick nervous strokes, but clear of the traffic and out in the open water they slowed to a longer, stronger pull, rising to a half-standing position and stretching forward to get a longer reach, throwing the whole weight of the body into the pull until they dropped back at the end of it on to the little stool.

'Good men,' said Can-Do. 'That's the style . . . lift her along . . . *pigi lekas*!'

'All li'. *Heemskirk* can-do,' said the steersman, nodding his head cheerfully and waving out into the darkness ahead.

'Hullo, Mahoganyface,' said Can-Do. 'You speak English, then?'

'Can-do,' said the steersman. 'Spik Inggriss, all li.'

But now Can-Do could not mistake the growing light in the East. The day was breaking and there was still a good mile to go. Would the *Heemskirk* keep close to her promised sailing hour? Could he reach her in time? He was more afraid of the tide that was running strong under them hastening her departure than of the daybreak. The roadstead of Sourabaya lies between the mainland and the big island of Madura, and, except for about half an hour of dead water at the turns of the tide, a strong current sweeps fiercely through the channel. If the *Heemskirk* was working under weakened power, they would want to get her out on the run of the tide, and would take some pains to avoid fighting against it. And the tide had already turned and would be helping her out now whenever they liked to get under way. They might wait for a better light, since the channel is sown with shoals and sands, but they would hardly be likely to wait for more light than would allow them to see their bearings. Can-Do looked at the sky and groaned. The light was growing rapidly.

He pointed to it and '*Heemskirk pigi*,' he said to the steersman. He nodded. 'My savvy,' he said, 'suppose ship catch small piecee day . . .' and he pointed to the sky—'small piecee water,' and he pointed to the running tide—'ship go Singapo' one-time.'

'That's it to a dot,' said Can-Do anxiously. 'And she's got her piecee water, and her piecee day is coming with a rush. You tell these blighters to shake 'er up.'

'My think can-do,' said the steersman again; but he looked anxiously at the light that was growing on the water and spoke to the crew.

The men at the spade-handled oars were working with the strength and regularity of pistons, the muscles bunching and sliding in forearm and calf. Now the two men in the bows stood up and slipped off the thin vests and knickers they wore, and stood naked save for a narrow loin-cloth. One stood over the rower in the bow, and, one hand at a time, took the oar from him, let him slip sideways from his place, and dropped into his seat without losing a stroke. The second spare man did the same with the second oarsman, and presently the steersman changed places with stroke.

The smooth water hissed from the boat's forefoot and along her sides with the sound of ripping silk, little swirling eddies, that told

something of the strength of the stroke, boiled up after each oar had lifted from the water, the wake seethed and bubbled astern of them. Can-Do knew that the men were straining every nerve and muscle, and that the boat was travelling at racing speed, but . . . the light was growing; and although he could see no more yet than the shadowy loom of the shore, it was light enough for him to see all the details of his boat and the boatmen, to see the play of the knotting and smoothing bunches of muscle, the glistening sweat that ran on them from head to foot, even the clenching teeth and set faces. Can-Do swayed back and forward in the sternsheets to each stroke, as the cox of a racing eight sways to lift the boat in a close finish. He gasped with the rowers and unconsciously tensed and slacked his muscles in time to their movements.

Then, somewhere ahead of them in the grey light, a ship's syren boomed, faint and far off. 'The *Heemskirk*,' gasped Can-Do. 'She's getting under way. Now then, bullies, a last go for it. Shake 'er up. Lift her. *Pigi*, you cripples, *pigi lekas*!'

The rowers changed places again; the fresh men reached out in a longer stroke, rose from their seats and flung themselves back with every ounce of their weight added to the wrenching pull of their arms, while the relieved men sat limp, with heaving chests and panting breath and limbs trembling from their effort.

The syren boomed again, this time nearer—appreciably nearer. 'You'll do it,' yelled Can-Do. 'You'll do it yet, my hearties. Oh, *good* men. Let 'er have it, soak it to her. *Pigi*, my bullies, *pigi—pigi*!'

He dived into his pocket and pulled out a handful of silver and rattled it between his hands. 'That's yours, my lads,' he said, 'the minute we hook on to her ladder. Never mind if she's moving, I can jump for it—*pigi* then.'

A third time the bellowing hoot came from the steamer, and Can-Do caught a glimpse of a dim grey shadow ahead of them. But at the same time he heard a sound that sent his heart down into his boots—the thresh of a ship's propeller. The boatman heard it too, and laid a hand on Can-Do's arm. 'Ship go,' he said softly, and shook his head. 'You no can-do.'

'She might stop,' said Can-Do desperately. 'She might slow for something. Keep going a bit yet. See here . . .' and he pulled out his pocket-book and snatched a note and fluttered it in the faces of the steersman and the gasping rowers. 'Put me

alongside, and it's yours. You're catching her. By cracky, you're catching her I tell you. Pull again, quicken her up, stroke . . . pull your arms out. She's nearer . . . you'll do it yet.'

Certainly the loom of the ship was larger, and it began to look as if they were actually going to win. But even as the hope surged through Can-Do, the beat of the screw quickened, and the shape of the ship began to lessen again.

'Hail her,' said Can-Do, but found his own lips too parched and his throat too dry to do more than raise a hopelessly faint yell of 'A-hoy!'

The rowers dropped their oars and all together sent a wailing yell across the water. But the *Heemskirk's* screw-beats never faltered, and her grey shadow faded steadily into the lighter grey of daybreak.

Ten minutes later, when the sun shot up and flooded the world with light, they saw her steaming steadily down the channel, the sunlight gleaming on her white upperworks, and the furrows from her bows streaming out in wide pencillings against the shining water of the channel.

Missing her was a heart-breaking blow to Can-Do, but he showed enough of the right stuff to call up a smile (if it was a shade stiff) and pass some words of praise to the *serang* for the effort his men had made. After they had rested and recovered their breath they began to pull heavily in, while he sat in the stern chewing over his unpleasant reflections and vainly cudgelling his mind for a plan to get to Singapore by the twenty-fifth.

He knew there was no other boat touching anywhere in Java that would do it, because he had the time-table and arrival and departure dates of every liner by heart. He had even thought of chartering a fast motor-boat, but it was a fifteen hundred mile trip, and he couldn't get one to carry fuel enough or an owner or crew to risk it. The next boat from Batavia he could catch, and she would get him in on the twenty-sixth, which was no more good to him than getting there in a month or a year.

The sampan slanted across the stern of a tiny steamer with a Chinese flag at the main and a Blue Peter limp at the fore. '*Hai-tan*, Singapore,' he read on her stern as they passed her and the barge from which crates of live pigs were swinging aboard. He had heard of her type and trade—a 'pig-boat,' owned by a Chinese firm probably, a crazy patchwork of rusty plates and worn-out engines, fit years ago for the breakers' yard, but bought up at scrap-

iron price, manned by cheap Lascars, Malays, Chinese, officered by broken-down men whose much smudged 'tickets' were about all that was left to them, set to the last and lowest job to which a ship could well come, running cargoes of live pigs from China or the islands of the Indies to the Singapore market.

The Singapore market . . . and Blue Peter at the fore. Can-Do sat up quickly. 'Here,' he said, 'my go *Hai-tan*. You savvy?'

'Can-do,' said the steersman, and swung the sampan's head round. In a few minutes they ran alongside, and Can-Do climbed up the filth-littered ladder over the side. The noise and the stench clamoured to the high heavens; the decks were piled to half-way up the funnel with open basket-work crates, each just big enough for the pig to lie down in; the 'tween deck was crammed from end to end and from floor to deck-beams with squealing, grunting, stinking pigs. They were piled in tiers one above the other, placed tail to tail and with snouts out to a gangway between the piles just wide enough for a man to edge along. On deck it was the same. The stacks of live pigs filled every foot of space except the narrow gangways running fore and aft, and a square of about five feet at the entrance to the 'saloon.'

Can-Do looked into the saloon in passing. It was about ten feet long by eight wide, and it held about a score of chattering Chinese coolies, squatting on mats and little lacquered boxes, playing cards, or looking on and smoking. The reek of opium oozed out from the open door, and huddled away in the corners were five or six half-naked sleeping figures. Can-Do passed and made his way along an alley, the long snouts of the squealing pigs almost touching his elbows, and the deck underfoot slippery with filth, climbed the short ladder, and found himself on the tiny bridge.

A China boy in surprisingly clean white clothes followed him up the ladder and asked in pidgin English what he wanted. Can-Do explained that he wanted to speak to the captain; but the boy shook his head.

'No-can,' he said; 'Captain belong sick—welly sick.'

This was a difficulty, but Can-Do asked next for the mate. He might find out from him if there was any chance of a passage, anyhow. The boy invited him to follow and led the way back along the gangway through the piled-up pigs.

There was an alley-way between the deck-house over the engine-room and the house that held the tiny cabins of the white officers, and it ran out on to a narrow platform that passed round aft of the

engine-room house to the entrance leading below. The platform was an oasis in the wilderness of pigs, and here, sitting on camp stools—there was no room for deck chairs—Can-Do found the mate and the chief engineer. They looked at him in some surprise, and when they learned his errand the air of surprise increased considerably. He explained first that he had come aboard to see the captain, but was told he was sick.

'That's right,' said the mate. 'He's not fit to see you, and won't before we're under way.'

'Then perhaps I can do my business with you,' said Can-Do. 'I want to know if there's any chance of fixing up with the skipper or you for a passage to Singapore?'

'Aboard the *Hai-tan*?', said the mate in blank astonishment, and the engineer rose and strolled out of earshot. 'Almighty, mister, are you crazy?'

'I hope not,' said Can-Do, smiling, 'though I'm sure crazy to get to Singapore.'

'You must be,' said the mate drily; 'why didn't you go on the passenger boat this morning?'

'I just missed her by inches and seconds,' said Can-Do. 'And it's absolutely urgent that I get to Singapore before the twenty-fifth. You can hardly help doing that if your engines turn round at all, so I thought you might help me out.'

The mate shook his head. 'Can't be done,' he said. 'The Old Man isn't fit to see you, but I can tell you just what he'd say.'

'I'm willing to pay, of course,' said Can-Do, 'the same passage money as I'd have paid the passenger boat. But if I'm paying, I might as well hand the money to you or the Old Man instead of your owners or agents here. It's your hospitality I'm trespassing on, and you ought to get the cash for the inconvenience.'

'It's impossible,' said the mate. 'If the owners heard of it, it would be sack for the Old Man or me certain.'

'Well, I'll pay you enough to hand over a decent passage money to them and have something over,' said Can-Do, but the mate shook his head again.

'Go'n see the agents here if you like,' he said. 'But I can tell you what they'll say before you see them. They won't take you, on any terms or at any price. They had trouble once wi' a passenger they shipped, and they never forgot it. Something in the Customs he was. We've plain orders on carrying passengers, except coolies

that pay passage money and are signed on as pig-hands ; and the orders are flat—no passengers.'

'I'll sign on as a coolie if you like,' said Can-Do, smiling.

The mate looked at him closely. 'Is it a police business?' he asked, 'because that would make more trouble than Customs.'

'No,' said Can-Do simply. 'It's partly because of my firm's business and partly because of my own girl—and I can't tell you how desperately anxious they both make me to get to Singapore.'

'It's no good,' said the mate. 'Man alive, d'you see the livin' pigsty we are? There isn't a bare spot on the ship you could find room to stretch yourself to sleep. The saloon—save the mark—is packed wi' filthy coolies, and the cabins the officers have aren't big enough for them to turn round in. It's a solemn fact we have to open the door to get room to dress. Where would you go?—but it's idle askin' that. We can't take you; that's flat an' final, and I'd rather you didn't worry me more over it.'

'Mister,' said Can-Do earnestly, 'I know when a man means what he says, and I see you mean it. But I tell you I'm desperate. Can't you stretch a point and take me? I see how you're fixed, but I'll put up with anything without a whimper. I see it's no question of pay with you, or I'd run my price up to the last dollar I own. Can't you do it?'

'I'm sorry,' said the mate. 'Honest, mister, I'm sorry; but straight—I can't. I'm responsible, and that's my last word.'

'What would happen if I stowed away without saying more to you?' asked Can-Do.

'The same as if I took you—sack,' said the mate. 'And I tell you plain I can't afford to get sacked from any more ships.'

'Could the engineer do anything for me, d'you think?'

'No,' answered the mate, 'though you may ask him if you like. I won't listen to what you have to say to him.'

He called the engineer and walked to the other end of the alleyway while Can-Do spoke to him. But the engineer was curt to a point of rudeness. He barely heard Can-Do out before he answered him.

'I've naething more'n the mate t'say. An' I ken weel what that was—no, and at whatever price ye'd pay—no.'

'I'm in a desperate fix,' said Can-Do, but the engineer interrupted him.

'Sae would me an' the mate be in a desperate fix if we took ye. Guarantee us anither ship and prove ye can see us signed on, an'

we'll say yes. But if y' are fit t' find anither ship for me, it's mair than I am myself.'

Can-Do gave it up after that. It was the more bitter to do it because the mate admitted that they were good for eight to nine knots in smooth water, and of smooth water they were certain. This would have got him in ahead of the *Heemskirk*, and Can-Do shook hands and went over the side pondering that fact. There was no time to go to the agents, even if the mate had not been so emphatic on their reply to his request. The *Hai-tan* was loading from the last barge then, and would sail in an hour to get out on the tail of the tide.

Can-Do dropped into his sampan, and the men commenced the pull for the shore. But before they reached it Can-Do touched the steersman and pointed down the channel the *Hai-Tan* would take in an hour.

'My go that way,' he said. 'Shove her round and row easy,' and with gestures he helped out his meaning till the wondering steersman turned the boat's head, and they went sliding down the channel close to the shore and past the *Hai-tan*, busy in mid-stream completing her loading.

Can-Do's plan was a very simple one, but he had a great deal of difficulty in making it plain to the boatmen.

None of them spoke English beyond the 'pidgin,' and although Can-Do had picked up enough of that to express a few elementary simple requirements, and the natives knew enough to understand such, it was quite a difficult thing to find enough of it to explain a procedure which was very far out of the ordinary. Can-Do, however, managed by the aid of a minimum of 'pidgin' and a maximum of pantomimic gestures.

He pointed to himself, the *Hai-tan*, and down the channel towards the direction of Singapore in turn.

'My go *Hai-tan*; *Hai-tan* go Singapore,' he said; and the steersman looked a little surprised, as well he might, since they were well past the *Hai-tan* and pulling steadily away from her. 'My no savvy,' he said. '*Hai-tan* belong . . .' and he pointed back up the channel, 'sampan no belong—no *pigi Hai-tan*.'

Can-Do was quite pleased with this effort. 'But now here's the darn trouble, John,' he said. 'Mate *Hai-tan* will not . . . no, that won't do. Mate *Hai-tan* refuses . . . no, darn it, that's worse. Mate *Hai-tan*—'

'Maat *Hai-tan*? No savvy "maat" *Hai-tan*,' put in John.

'Don't savvy "mate," you chump? . . . why, *mate*, officer. Here, how's this—capitan *Hai-tan*?'

'My savvy capitan *Hai-tan*,' said John, brightening up.

'Capitan *Hai-tan* say—speak—my no-can belong *Hai-tan* go Singapore.'

'My savvy,' said John emphatically, 'my savvy.'

Can-Do's 'pidgin' ran out about here, and he fell back on gestures and illustration. He took out two cigarettes and held one up, laid it on the thwart and said, 'Allee same *Hai-tan*'; laid the other there and said, 'Allee same sampan.' He pointed towards the real *Hai-tan* and slowly pointed along the channel out ahead of them. '*Hai-tan* go Singapore,' he said, moved the cigarette *Hai-tan*, and repeated '*Hai-tan* go Singapore.' When John had absorbed this, Can-Do made him understand that the second cigarette represented the sampan they were in. Then he moved the *Hai-tan* cigarette slowly along, slanted the sampan one towards it, and brought them side by side and moving together. Then he pointed out to an imaginary *Hai-tan* coming up astern of them, made pantomime of the sampan men pulling, brought the phantom *Hai-tan* alongside, and then, picking up a bamboo pole boat-hook, grabbed the phantom ship, and hauled alongside. Then he thrust the boat-hook into John's hands, said, 'Savvy, boat-hook'—touching it—'belong *Hai-tan*. My go *Hai-tan*,' and he pretended to scramble up the boat-hook.

A slow smile came over John's face, and he chuckled softly. He explained to the boatmen, who had watched the performance with absorbed interest, and the natives shouted laughter, and chattered and pointed to Can-Do and made extravagant imitations of him scrambling up the *Hai-tan*'s side. One even grasped another and pretended to help hoist him up, grinning and chattering at Can-Do.

'You've got it,' said Can-Do with huge delight, 'and you're in on this game with me, I can see. Now about terms.' He pulled out his pocket-book and took out notes for twenty guilders. 'When my belong *Hai-tan*, notes—I mean guilders—belong sampan,' and he made a motion of tossing the notes back into the boat.

'My savvy,' said John, nodding his head; 'suppose you catchee *Hai-tan*, my catchee piecee *wang*—my catchee dollah.'

'You're on, John,' said Can-Do. 'You catchee the *wang-dang* dollars every time.'

Then Can-Do made them settle down and pull along steadily

towards the widening opening of the channel. He knew that if there was the slightest chance of throwing him off the *Hai-tan*, that mate would do it, and he wanted to be too far out for there to be any chance sampan hanging round to be hailed and hired to dump him ashore again. The only chance of a successful finish to his plan would be for his sampan to clear off as soon as he had left her, for no other one to be available, and for the mate to have no choice between throwing him into the sea and the jaws of any passing shark, or taking him on to Singapore.

The sampan men evidently understood the position without further explanations having to be made, for they pulled steadily but easily until the channel opened out into a wide and empty sheet of water. Then they eased off and let her drift, and rolled tobacco in dried indian-corn leaves, and lolled and smoked, chattering and laughing amongst themselves.

A big, square-headed, Blue Funnel cargo-boat came plodding in from the sea just as the tide was on the turn, and Can-Do could see from the winding course she took across that wide expanse of water, that, despite its width, a channel through it had to be kept to; and when the steamer passed within pistol shot of them he knew the sampan lay right in the channel and could intercept any boat bound in or out.

The tide was well slacked before a black spot on the horizon gave the first warning of the *Hai-tan's* coming, and Can-Do could see by the smoke pouring from her that she was bustling to get clear of the run of the tide before slack water moved and turned its strength against her speed. The sampan men threw away their smokes, settled themselves to their oars, and commenced to pull seaward again, while the steersman sat with his chin on his shoulder watching the course of the coming steamer.

As Can-Do noted the speed at which she was moving, the quickly looming height of her, the 'bone in her teeth' of white water tumbling from her bows, he began to wonder if it was quite such a simple plan as he had imagined to lay alongside her and scramble on board.

He looked at the steersman, saw the growing doubt in his look, nodded emphatically, and assured him 'Can-do, can-do.' The man gave way to his stronger will and returned a resigned 'Can-do.'

The *Hai-tan* was very near now, and Can-Do could see distinctly the man at the wheel and the white jacket of the mate pacing the bridge. The sampan took an inward sheer towards the course the steamer was making, and Can-Do saw the mate stop, look at them

a moment, and jerk the line to the syren. A puff of white steam spouted and the whistle shrieked a warning at them.

Can-Do was crouched down out of sight behind the steersman, who merely waved a hand in answer to the whistle. But he held steadily on a course that must bring him across the steamer's, and the whistle screamed angrily at him again and again; there was a hoarse shouting and excited jabbering from the steamer, an answering shrill chatter from the sampan, and then, clear and distinct as if they were on board, they heard the tinkle of the telegraph bell; promptly the white foam dropped and the curling wave fell away from the oncoming cut-water.

Now, when the bows were abreast of them and slipping past, the sampan men gave a last strong pull, the steersman shoved his helm hard over, and the bow man slid his oar in smartly and picked up the long bamboo boat-hook. The black side rushed at them, but at the critical second John swung his helm back, two pairs of hands fended smartly off, and the boat-hook rose, dropped neatly in the shrouds, and held on.

The mate was leaning over the end of the bridge yelling English, Malay, and 'pidgin' at the sampan, when he saw a white figure rise swiftly, leap on the boat's gunwale, seize the boat-hook, turn and fling back a white paper into the bottom of the boat, and then scramble smartly up the ship's side. He recognised Can-Do, and saw at once what the game was, but before he had time to more than shout a few excusable curses at him, and yell for some of the coolies to chuck the intruder back into his boat, the boat-hook disengaged and fell, and the sampan was drifting rapidly astern with the crew hastily throwing out their oars and settling to pull clear.

Half a dozen coolies came scrambling over the tops of the pig baskets to get at Can-Do, but he swung himself into the shrouds, ran up them to the mast, leaned out and caught those on the other side, and came down them, hand under hand, while the coolies scrambled back to meet him. He dodged them, ran to the bridge ladder and up it, and touched his cap calmly to the furious mate.

'Come aboard, sir,' he reported gravely, and the mate could only mouth threats and curses at him. ' . . . I'll have you slung overboard,' he shouted. 'You can swim for all I care. You'd beat me, would you, you . . .'

'Look here, mister,' said Can-Do calmly. 'Let's get down to business. I don't know whether your steamer or my sampan was to blame, but you nearly ran us down; I thought we were done for,

and scrambled aboard you. My boat bolted and left me here, and—here I am. If you sling me off, I'll probably be nailed by a shark, and that will only make trouble for you, as my sampan men would be sure to report it. You couldn't possibly help my coming aboard, and I'll give you a signed statement to your owners on that, so that they can't blame you.'

'Of all the blasted cheek,' ejaculated the mate in tones of angry amazement. 'Give me a signed statement—'

'Tuan!' interrupted the man at the wheel, and the mate looked round to see him twirling and fingering at the useless spokes. With the engines stopped, the ship had lost her way, and the sweep of the tide was evidently carrying her out of the channel and into shoal water. With an oath the mate jumped to the telegraph and wrenched it over, the bell jangled below, and the clank and rumble of the engines broke out in immediate response.

For the next few minutes the mate had his hands exceedingly full of the difficult task of swinging clear of the maze of sandbanks and getting safely back into the channel, and during those minutes you may be sure Can-Do kept himself as inconspicuous and out of the way as he knew how.

When the mate turned and saw him again after the ship was safe back in the channel, the sampan was a speck in the distance, and the mate looked Can-Do up and down, turned to look at the sampan and then out round the empty waters, and with tight-closed lips turned and jerked the telegraph handle round to 'Full Ahead,' and gave the steersman his course.

'You're here,' he said abruptly to Can-Do, 'and I s'pose you've got to stay here. But how you'll explain yourself to the Old Man I don't know. That's your pidgin, and I warn you it isn't going to be pleasant or easy. And another thing you can bet on is that you're going to have nothing but a perfect beast of a passage on this packet. I don't even know where you'll find bare room to sleep, unless it's on top of the tiers of pigs.'

'It's getting into Singapore before the twenty-fifth that is my one and only want,' said Can-Do. 'That at least can-do, and I'm game to take whatever else comes along.'

He was to find that Harden, the mate, was literally right in his warning, as Can-Do proved to the hilt before that miserable day was out. He was dead beat and felt fit to drop after the rush and worry and excitement of a full twenty-four hours with body and muscles on the stretch at intervals, and brain more fully on the

stretch without any interval whatever. He would have given all he possessed for a bed, or even for a spot where he could lie down and sleep; but it was too true that there was no such spot to be found. The pigs were piled from rail to rail, and six feet above them; and save for the narrow passages between the piles there was not a square foot of deck to be seen except where, at the entrance to the saloon door, a tiny one was walled in with living pigs, and continually being trodden by the natives. There was no room even amongst the filthy opium-smoking Chinese in the saloon, even if they would have allowed him to push in there amongst them.

Below deck was simply one solid block of live pig, except again in the narrow alley-ways between their snouts and in the engine-room and coal bunkers—all of which spaces were filled with a stench almost as solid and alive as the cargo itself.

So Can-do wandered from the bow to the stern of the steamer, poking round and searching for no more than room to lay his tired limbs, and searching without success; for wherever there was a nook or corner big enough to hold a man, it was big enough to hold a pig; and on that boat the pig had first rights.

Where pigs were not allowed, there were already sleepers curled up on scraps of matting. The skylights to the engine-room were open, and on the table of the raised windows Can-Do counted eight coolies lying asleep; at the end of each alley-way of pigs a mat was spread, and one or two men were huddled. There were plenty of coolies awake and hard at work feeding their cargo, and Can-Do wondered where they found room to sleep, until presently he saw two of the coolies set down the empty rice tub they were carrying round, rouse two of the sleepers, and, when they had moved out, curl up in their places. There was always work to do evidently, so there must always be workers awake, and they used the scant sleeping-places in turn.

There were so many pigs on board that the feeding and watering of them never really ceased. By the time the last of them had been attended to, it was time to start again on the first. They were for the market, of course, and some of them would have been at sea a fortnight or more, so that it was necessary to feed them well and keep their weight up. They were fed on cheap spoilt or rotted boiled rice, carried round in huge tubs, ladled out into little grass-mat baskets and pushed between the wicker bars of the cages under the nose of each prisoner. The pig simply lay and

gorged itself. It had no room to stand up, no room to turn round, no room to do anything except lie and eat and squeal. The squealing was unceasing and ear-splitting. It was worse than squealing—some of the brutes snarled and growled and barked exactly like mongrel curs, and as Can-Do would hardly have believed a pig could. They grunted and grabbed, they snorted and coughed and groaned and shrieked. Now and then the uproar would slack away a little; then in some distant corner a tornado of angry squabbling gutturals and yelps would break out, accompanied by a chorus of high-pitched, nerve-racking, long sustained screams and piercing shrieks. Rank after rank, tier after tier of pigs took up the row in turn, till the babel of noise filled the ship from end to end, clamoured and beat deafeningly on the stupified senses.

Can-Do gave up his search for a resting-place after he had with a pleasant thrill of hope clambered up to one of the lifeboats on top of the main-deck house and found it also crammed with baskets of pigs. He climbed down and made his way wearily to the bridge, where he found a young and unknown man in charge. He was the second officer, and evidently the mate had explained Can-Do's presence somehow, for he merely looked up with languid interest, nodded, and turned away again to lean over the bridge rail.

'You don't have too much sleeping accommodation aboard,' said Can-Do, by way of opening a conversation.

The Second turned a dull eye on him without moving round, said, 'Ingleesh no-can,' and looked away again.

'That so?' said Can-Do casually. 'Well now, I reckon by your looks, young fella, there's a mighty heap o' things you no-can. I'd like to bet you know more about no-canning most things than a pork packer does about canning 'em. What are you anyway? What nation has the honour of owning you? You savvy Deutscher? Hollander? Eh?'

The Second glanced round, shook his head languidly about one inch each way, and said 'No-can.'

'Oh, don't strain your intellect using long sentences thataway,' expostulated Can-Do. 'And now, Mister Born-talker, although I know it's a thing that's contrary to all ship's etiquette, I'm going to dump right down in a corner of your bridge and go to bye-bye, soothed by the lullaby of your brothers in the baskets.'

He took off his jacket, rolled it, jammed it in a corner of the bridge, and lay down with it for a pillow. The Second looked round slowly at him, and, without taking his elbows off the rail, remarked,

'No-can,' and when Can-Do took no notice, raised his voice a little and repeated it, still without moving.

'Don't apologise,' said Can-Do cheerfully. 'I'll be quite comfy, thank'ee. Good-night,' and he dropped down and nestled his head into his pillow. This time the Second moved and came slowly across to him. 'No-can,' he said loudly. 'You savvy—no-can.'

'You wait about ten seconds,' said Can-Do drowsily, 'and see whether I can or no. I tell you, Mister No-can, this is the happiest moment of my life. I wouldn't . . . 'scuse me now like a good chap . . . run away'n play. . . . G'night.'

With that he drowsed off into the most blissful slumber he had ever known. The bare planks under him, the stiff rasping linen coat under his head, the scorching flame of the sun on his body—of all this he knew or thought nothing. The screaming and squealing and grunting of the crowded pigs sank to a soothing lullaby, the clanking rumble of the worn and patched old engines, the grating jar of the misfitting propeller parts, harmonised together into a gentle murmuring song, and then . . . the nothingness of the deepest sleep.

He was roused by the shock of a blow upon his ribs, and, before he could properly arouse his sleep-drunken wits, by another and another in a quick shower.

He saw a pair of white-clad legs delivering kick after kick, he heard a hoarse voice bellowing at him, 'You dirty schwine-pig! You on my bridge schleep—hein!'

Can-Do could not roll clear of the vicious kicks, for he was jambed against the canvas dodger of the bridge. He reached out and snatched at the standing leg, the white-clad figure came down with a crash, and in a flash Can-Do was on his feet and returning the kicks with interest.

'Now get up,' he snarled. 'Get up an' be knocked down.' The burly, crimson-faced man struggled to his feet, Can-Do's fist shot out on the instant, and he went down again with a crash and a bellowing yell.

'I don't kick a man when he's down as a rule,' said Can-Do viciously, 'but don't tempt me too much. Gerrup an' have some more. You'd kick me, would you, you bloated sourkrout sausage-eater.'

The burly man groaned and sat up slowly, as the mate came running up the ladder. 'You, mister,' said the sitting man, pointing a shaking finger at Can-Do, 'over the rail that man schling.'

'Schling yourself,' retorted Can-Do. 'You——'

'Here, what's all this?' broke in the mate sharply.

'Ask him,' said Can-Do angrily. 'That bloated barrel came kicking me in the ribs when I was lying there asleep. So I just knocked him down. Who is the beast anyway?'

'Well,' said the mate grimly, 'he's the captain of this packet.'

The captain lumbered to his feet. 'Jansen,' he shouted, 'my gun bring. I mitt mine gun to him will talk.'

He brushed past Can-Do and staggered into the tiny cabin that was perched in the middle of the narrow bridge.

'You best duck out quick,' said the mate hurriedly. 'He's drunk—not as drunk as usual, but drunk enough to shoot. Get out o' sight till I have a chance to smooth him down.'

'Duck nothing,' said Can-Do angrily. 'I'm not going to stand for being kicked round the boat by a drunken Dutchman, and then run away from his gun. Him and his gun together! He's too drunk to hit a haystack. I'll rush him and chuck the thing overboard.'

The mate moved quickly to the door just as the captain emerged. He carried an automatic pistol in his hand ready for action. The mate spoke soothingly to him, but the captain volleyed guttural abuse on him, and bade him stand aside. The second officer had run to the ladder and dived hastily down, and, at sight of the pistol, the man at the wheel let go and ran for it. The captain roared an order after him, then flung up the pistol and fired. The mate leaped at him, and instantly Can-Do heard again the sharp *smack* of the automatic, saw the mate reel back, and drop.

Can-Do ran at the drunken man, a bullet whipped past his ear, and then . . . a jarring shock threw both men off their feet, the deck quivering and buckling under them. Can-Do scrambled up, felt the vessel rebound and surge forward with a lurch; saw the deck tilt sideways, and heard the tearing, grinding, ripping crashes that told all too plainly of the jagged rocks that were tearing her underwater body open from end to end as a blunt knife tears tissue paper.

(To be continued.)

MEDIAEVAL BIRDS.

BY L. F. SALZMAN, F.S.A.

In the somewhat dreary waste of official letters preserved in the Public Record Office, neatly mounted in red-bound volumes of impressive solidity, under the title of 'Ancient Correspondence,' one is occasionally rewarded by the discovery of a document containing some human and personal touch. One such that fell to my net recently was a letter from that worthy but asthmatic old lady, Eleanor of Provence, widow of Henry III, to her affectionate and dutiful son, Edward I. The letter, which is in that particular brand of French then in use at the English Court, thanks him for a present of cranes, which he had sent without their heads, and which she had found very fat and good.

It then continues :

'In regard that you desire us to let you know which we prefer, the bodies of the cranes without the heads or the heads without the birds ; we tell you that for us and for Monsire Huge le fuiz Otes the bodies are more suitable, but for you and Monsire Nicole de Cogeho the heads, because . . .'

At this critical place the fading of the ink has rendered additionally obscure a mild little joke of which the point was not particularly obvious in any case. If my deciphering is correct, the reason given is 'because your payments for cranes' heads cause them to be too highly seasoned (*trop bien saluz*),' and the reference is probably to the lavish rewards which Edward gave to the messengers who brought him the heads of the first cranes taken by hawks which were being trained for him. As an instance of his liberality we find that in 1290, when the servant of Sir John de Beauvent brought to the King at Querington, in Gloucestershire, the head of a crane which his gervant 'Calemare' had taken in Lindsay, he was given 6s. 8d. (equivalent to £4 10s. in modern money) 'for the good news which he brought,' and the same reward was given, in 1305, to Thomas Foukes, servant of Sir Robert de Bavant, bringing a crane's head to the King on behalf of his master, who was at this time one of the King's trainers.

There exist a number of Edward's letters written to Sir Robert in this same year, 1305, which show that the royal sportsman was well acquainted with the details of the elaborate process of training hawks, and took as much joy in issuing minute instructions in these matters as his father had done in matters of art or architecture. They also show that the culminating test of the falcon was its ability to take cranes, to which height it only rose after fleshing its talons on small waterfowl and winning its spurs in the pursuit of herons.

I am not sufficient naturalist to know whether the crane is still a frequent visitor to our shores, but I suspect that it is nearly as scarce as its unattractive relation, *Peronopterus*, of which, judging from the fact that it 'never is content but whining and grumbling,' the present habitat would seem to be on the north cliffs of Fleet Street.

Cranes must evidently have been fairly plentiful in the eastern counties in the fourteenth century, though as they were sometimes bought for sporting purposes, it is possible that they were also imported. As they were in the habit of leaving windy Ilium and the Hellespont at the approach of winter and sudden rains for the warmth of Africa and the excitement of waging war with the pigmies, I should have supposed that they would only have been found in England during the summer, and I admit I am puzzled to find Edward writing on March 11 to the effect that the craning season is passing. Possibly, however, the Hellespontine cranes of Homer, flying in noisy, chattering crowds, differed in habits from the wilier cranes of later date and most westerly origin, who obtained the double advantage of ballast against winds and silence, best of shields for a plump and defenceless bird, by carrying stones in their bills during their migrations.

In one of these letters to Bavant, King Edward expresses himself as much annoyed to hear that some of his gerfalcons are turning out badly and that one in particular seems hopeless. Such disappointments were often the lot of the hawker, and just three hundred years later we find the Earl of Shrewsbury writing apologetically to Sir Robert Cecil about a laner hawk, which he had obtained for him on somebody else's recommendation—'she is but a slugg, now being commended to you for so rare and excellent a bird,' adding, after various disparaging remarks, 'the next hawk I commend unto you before my own eyes have seen her fly, shall be made of orient pearl.' It must have been a bird of the same

type that the great Cecil had himself given a few years before to Sir Edward Winter, who acknowledged the gift with more candour than courtesy: 'Your Barbary falcon I received, which if I should praise very much you would rather commend me for a courteous knight than a skilful falconer. But, howsoever, I thank you for her, though I think she be dead or this.'

Another fact which the Edwardian records bring out is that Dame Julian Berners, earliest of literary sportswomen, was merely indulging her fancy in drawing up a list of the several kinds of hawks apportioned to the several ranks of society. Edward did indeed use the gerfalcons which she assigns to kings, but he did not despise the laner of the esquires or the goshawk of the yeomen, while the falcon gentle, which Dame Julian would reserve for dukes, was certainly used at this time by knights. When, in 1280, the villeins of Harewick, exasperated by the oppressions of their lord, Sir Simon de Pierpoint, rose up and sacked his house, they tore his tabard, beat his charger, and slew his gentle falcon, and it would be easy to show that no such hard and fast classification existed in fact, either at that date or at the end of the fifteenth century, when the lady wrote. Oddly enough, Dame Julian's opening class of eagles for emperors, which sounds improbable, had some justification, for 'the Muscovian emperors reclaime eagles to fly at hindes, foxes, etc., and such a one was sent as a present for Queen Elizabeth.'

Eagles would occasionally attack the lesser birds of prey, but on some occasions, if the mediaeval naturalists are to be trusted, the intelligence of the quarry proved too much for the brute force of the kingly pursuer.

At Rouen, in the twelfth century, an eagle having killed one of a pair of falcons, the survivor, anticipating the tactics of Judson with his flat-iron gunboat, enticed his enemy to pursue him closely, and diving suddenly through a small hole in a wooden bridge had the satisfaction of hearing the eagle crash in fatal haste against the timber. Yet we must not fall into the error of regarding the eagle as a stupid bird, for 'subtile shee is and wittie, for when shee hath seazed upon tortoises and caught them up with her tallons shee throweth them downe from aloft to breake their shels.' It must be admitted that this particular example of her wit partakes rather of the nature of practical joking, and especially so in the famous case of the poet Aeschylus, upon whose bald head an eagle dropped a tortoise with disastrous accuracy.

Returning once more to Edward I, we find him not only getting the assistance of Sir Robert de Bavant and expressing his thanks to Dame Mary de Merke for the care she had taken of 'our falcon Marmaduke,' but also addressing his thanks and his supplications to higher quarters. Quite early in his reign he laid down the rule that when a new falcon took its first crane, 13*d.* should be given in alms *pro Deo*, and there are a number of cases in which pilgrimages were undertaken for the health of sick hawks. Occasionally the birds themselves were carried to the shrines, but more often their images in wax—no rough and ready puppets, but models carefully fashioned and painted by the King's own goldsmith, were sent, or, in less serious cases, a silver penny would be bent over the head of the bird in honour of some saint, at whose altar the penny was then offered. Chief of the pilgrimage shrines for the royal hawks were those of St. Thomas Cantelupe, at Hereford, and of the more famous St. Thomas Becket, at Canterbury. Why Cantelupe should have been chosen is not clear, but Becket had been a thorough sportsman in his early days and as a lad had almost lost his life in Pevensey Level, trying to rescue a drowning hawk. He had also, on several occasions, long before King Edward's time, miraculously saved the sick or injured hawks of his devotees, and even exerted his powers on behalf of Guiscard, the favourite falcon of his old adversary, Henry II. For the matter of that, Becket was not above aiding even humbler fowl, and when some boys at Canterbury, having plucked a dead gander, threw it into a corner, scoffingly commending it to St. Thomas, the Saint promptly restored it to life. As, however, he did not complete the miracle by restoring its feathers, the result was unsatisfactory to the gander, though it redounded greatly to the honour of the Saint, being authenticated by the testimony of the monks, who received it and—less considerate than the old lady who made flannel jackets for the geese which she had plucked while they were stupefied with cherry brandy—ate it. After all, the goose has, for all its alleged stupidity, no mean reputation. Apart from saving the Capitol, geese have displayed an affectionate attachment to humans comparable to that shown by the swan of St. Hugh of Lincoln, though it is true that Pliny, while recording these touching incidents, puts a higher value on their livers than on their hearts, and commends the Consul Scipio Metellus as the first inventor of *pâté de foie gras*, 'that great good and singular commoditie to mankind.'

In another miracle of St. Thomas, a starling escaped from the talons of a hawk by uttering a pious invocation of the saint, which its master had taught it. This ability of birds to imitate the human voice appealed to the ancients and, if we can hardly accept Pliny's statement that Drusus and Germanicus had nightingales which could speak Latin and Greek, there are plenty of more authentic stories of talking birds. It was a talking raven that, after it had been murdered by its master's rival, was accorded a magnificent public funeral by the populace of Rome, an honour which has probably never befallen any other bird, with the possible exception of the Egyptian Ibis, most sacred and cautious of birds. (*Medio tutissimus ibis*, 'In the midst is the ibis, most cautious of birds.') But far ahead of chough, magpie, jackdaw, starling, or raven in oratory was the gorgeous popinjay, now shorn of half his romance by his commonplace appellation of parrot. There is a pleasant story of a crusading knight, who, wandering on the shore near the popinjay-haunted slopes of Mount Gilboa, called out in jest to one bird: 'Our popinjay in its cage at home, who is very like you, sends you greeting,' whereupon the bird addressed fell down in a swoon. Returning home to England, the knight told his story to his admiring family, when suddenly his own popinjay, who had been listening intently, gave a dismal squawk and fell from its perch. Efforts to revive it were vain and it died, though whether from shock or from the effort to swallow its master's tale is not quite clear. Other equally veracious incidents connected with the bird's knowledge of the human tongue might be retailed, but it is more surprising to find that 'poppingayes, nightingales and other sweete singyng birds' are not infrequently classed together. Indeed, in a tale of two squires of Falmouth, of whom 'the one was dampnyd for breakyng his wedlock the tother was savyd,' we may read how 'tother' was escorted to the gates of Heaven, where:

'They harde upon the yates on high
Mynstralsy and Angelle song;
The Pellycan and the popynjaye
The tymor and the turtill trewe
An hondrede thousande in ther laye,
The nyghtyngale with notes newe.'

Neither the pelican nor the turtle-dove is usually classed in the first rank of singing birds, though they are both of unblemished

character, and, indeed, proverbial for piety and chastity. I can therefore only assume that they and the popinjay, which resembles the Pauline bishop in being the 'husband of one wife,' were admitted to the heavenly choir, as members are to country choirs, for moral rather than vocal excellence. On the other hand, if there were anything approaching a hundred thousand popinjays singing together, my memories of the parrot-house at the Zoo induce me to believe that the poet was mistaken, and that they had reached the gates, not of Heaven, but of—to employ the euphemism used in the House of Commons when speaking of the House of Lords—'another place.'

WILLIAM PATON KER.

AN ANNIVERSARY MEMORY FROM OVERSEA.

BY ANGELA THIRKELL.

THE death of William Paton Ker, departing from us on a clear July morning twelve months ago, among the slopes below Monte Rosa, is not only the loss of a scholar of great gifts and wide learning, but a deep personal grief to his friends and his friends' children. I read the other day in *The Times Literary Supplement* that 'Ker's lectures did not draw the men of the younger generation'; but one belonging to the generation which had just grown up before the war must bear tribute to the curious charm of his lectures, which wise youth may have seen fit to slight.

The level, unstressed, almost monotonous delivery, masking the enthusiasm with which he informed the matter in hand; the thin lips, scarcely opened to enunciate, reminding one of Wemmick's post-office mouth; the flashes of mordant humour, unemphasised, as if to insist that for an audience which cared to hear him a joke need not be obvious—all this we remember, and above all the tightly packed, allusive thought which only unfolded itself in one's mind later on, like those Japanese flowers which look like dry pith and expand in a bowl of water to varied shapes and colours. It was difficult, and one felt it presumptuous, to find a word to thank or praise him after he had spoken. Once, after a brilliant lecture on 'The Eighteenth Century,' a friend, remembering Herbert Pocket's words to Pip in Mr. Wopsle's dressing-room, pleased him greatly by saying as the audience passed out, 'Massive and concrete.' It provoked a short, reminiscent chuckle from him on more than one occasion.

His letters were almost as taciturn as he was, and, like their writer, said much by saying little. With a wedding present to a friend's child he wrote: 'I send a present—*Good Luck*, I say again, and it is not an idle word.' And again: 'I hope to see you soon. As for good wishes, they are perpetual.'

His friends will remember his way of dating letters by the names of saints' days, and one of them, after receiving several letters headed by the names of obscure saints, retaliated by dating the answers with such cullings from the almanack as 'Trinity Law Sittings end,' 'Gun and Game Licences expire.'

It was his pleasure to take chosen friends to the Zoological Gardens, where he knew many of the keepers, and one was allowed to go behind the cages and see baby animals or new arrivals. It

was here one day that he told the story of the four Scotsmen, which he declared to be the best story in the world and the most searching test of humour. His hearers luckily passed the test.

This is the story. Two Scotsmen were talking about a third. Said the first to the second, 'He has no sense of humour at all. He wouldn't see a joke if you were to fire it at him out of a pistol.' 'But,' objected the second, 'you can't fire a joke out of a pistol.' The first Scotsman went away depressed, and, meeting a fourth Scotsman, told him the second Scotsman's remark. The fourth Scotsman thought for a moment, and then said, with a short laugh, 'Ay, he had ye there.'

The name Ker is pronounced—and spelt—in many ways, and people who ought to have known better used to differ about it. Its true sound was settled by Mrs. W. Y. Sellar (her name is still dear in Oxford and Edinburgh), who addressed him with fine inappropriateness with 'Begone, dull Ker!' A younger friend was inspired to poetry on the same subject, and, after receiving a mock-sympathetic letter from Mr. Ker, complaining that a cold prevented him from singing Scottish songs, answered in the following lines :

'Dear Mr. Ker,
Though your voice isn't clear,
It may be, with care,
Dear Mr. Ker.

'Dear Mr. Ker,
How sprightly you are ;
Even more than you were,
Dear Mr. Ker.'

His love for Scotland and for hills and mountains was deep and real, and nearly every vacation would find him, usually of late years with a party of younger friends, in Arran or somewhere in the Alps. On one of these holidays he wrote, in 1911 :

'I write in the island of Arran, which is the most beautiful place in the world. I draw a picture so that you may know it when the boat comes in. [Here follows a little pen-and-ink sketch of hill-tops.] Just now the mist is down all over it, which is no doubt convenient for them that think they ought to be working at books.'

So one cannot grieve for W. P. Ker, dying peacefully, just after dawn, among the friendly hills ; only something splendid and steadfast has left us, and we are the poorer. But in his own words, 'As for good wishes, they are perpetual.'

TOUJOURS EN VEDETTE.

'BISMILLAH UL RAHMAN—UL RAHIM.'¹BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE MACMUNN,
K.C.B., K.C.S.I., D.S.O.'I touch my heart as the Easterns do,
May the peace of Allah abide with you.'

THE Afghan border is not by any means the exclusive holder of bare devil-hills that are red-hot in summer or icy cold in winter, nor hills that breed fierce wild tribes who can be made to throb to every beat of the drum ecclesiastic. 'Glory for all and heaven for those who bleed' will bring the swordsmen on to the bayonet point in other tracts than the Malakand; and it is no new thing.

It will be remembered how the historians of the Alexandrine legend tell of the opposition that the Macedonians met when they came across the *Aproetae*, who lived near the Khyber, and the *Puktidæ*, or those who spoke *Puktu*, in the hills around Swat, before, many generations before, the Graeco-Bactrian kings built temples in Ghandara and ruled the Northern Punjab. And so we may safely conclude that the Afridi, who still calls himself 'Apridi,' and the *Pathan*, who speaks *Pushtoo*, or *Packtoo*, or *Pukhto*, is no new-comer in the frontier hills that border on the land of Five Rivers.

So also that late gentleman-adventurer and leader of Greeks and Macedonians, Xenophon, a little earlier than Alexander, came also into collision with an ancient race, who still keep their name and their tiresome, well-armed ways. When the younger brother of Cyrus failed in his rebellion, and lost his life at the battle of Cunaxa, close to the banks of the Euphrates, opposite, and close also, to Bagdad, it will be remembered that his Greek mercenaries, exasperated and frightened at the treacherous murder of their Greek leaders, broke away and started on their march for the sea and those Greek settlements on the southern shore of the Euxine. First they struck the Tigris, close to what was later the City of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, and having crossed the Diala where Maude crossed it, then marched north for the mountains by the left bank of the Tigris, past Arbela, which still retains its ancient name in

¹ 'In the name of God, the merciful and the compassionate.'

the form of Erbil, as does Babylon under Babil. These remainder-names themselves are a matter of interest, for, in all that ancient land, the old names are gone save Shush, once 'Shushan, the Palace,' the home of blessed Mordecai.

He then must have passed Samara and the sites of Ashur, and Calneh, and Nineveh. Yet, garrulous and exact as a recorder of events as he was, he makes no mention of those giant ruins which stand to this day, and whose names must apparently have been blotted out from the memory of the countryside, agreeably to prophecy 'a desolation, a dryland, and a wilderness.' And finally he came to the country of the Carduchi. Now, the Carduchi lived in the mountains around Diarbekr and the north of Mosul, and very tiresome, well-armed mountaineers he found them, ready to be more than aggrieved with strangers who demanded right-of-way, or, indeed, went on their way without demand or any supererogatory ceremony.

And Xenophon's arrival in the country of the mountaineer Carduchi brings me to my story of the Carduchi of 1919, none other than the Kurds of Southern Kurdistan and Amadia and Zakkho, for actions against whom a new General Service Medal has commenced its career of record, with a clasp for 'Kurdistan.' Will any of the ten thousand of Xenophon's warriors, on their way to the sea, demand the issue, for they earned it well enough?

My story is an incident of these wars in Kurdistan, in which, when commanding the forces in Mesopotamia in 1919, it was my lot to be involved. I need not dwell on the circumstances, except so far as to introduce my incident. It will suffice to say that the unavoidable circumstances attendant on the strategic policy of the Great War left us with a considerable force in Mesopotamia, the land of the *Jezirah*, which men now prefer to call Iraq. That force was in organised formations, two divisions strong, with two cavalry brigades and a strong brigade of all arms in North Persia, with perhaps a dozen more battalions and odd units scattered along the many hundred miles of communications. Was it folly to stay there? Not a bit. There were not enough ships, to begin with, to get everyone to their homes. There were railways and river fleets whose future needed decision. There was a North Persian population recovering from the famine that Turk and Russian had involved them in. There was a fleet on the Caspian that British sailors were handing to Deniken's men. The Empire found itself astride the world, apart from the problems of Versailles. Who

could disengage immediately? Were we fools to be there at all? Ask those who sent Townsend to Kut in the first case, and then, O sapient ones, say if they were wrong on the facts before them. Why were we in Persia? Why were we on the Caspian? And why was Atkins astride the world so far even as Askhabad, on the Trans-Caspian Railway? See the story of the League of the White Horse, and the Hun endeavour to link his high cheek-bones and Tartar origin with Turk and Turanian of Central Asia. Not all madness either, though perhaps, only perhaps, far-fetched. Then in Iraq itself Pan-Islam, Pan-Turk, Pan-Arab, Pan-Kurd took coffee with each other at all the coffee-shops, the length and breadth of the *Jezirah*. And when all mankind who can frequent a coffee-shop commune with one another, the result, in time of unrest, can be imagined.

So while the peace was, as some say, lost at Versailles, a pretty pother was brewing in Mesopotamia, of which my successor, Sir Aylmer Haldane, was to reap the fruit in 1920, by the wide objectless rebellion of the tribes on the Euphrates and upper Tigris. My share lay in the mountains, where in 1919 the trouble began. The Wilayat of Mosul was bounded by Kurdish hills that lay between the Tigris and the Persian frontier, peopled by tribes that are economically based on Bagdad and Mosul, and were within Turkish limits, but paid as little attention to Turkish authority as they dared. I should like to tell the untold story of the rising in the tobacco state of Sulimanieh, which for our purposes was known as Southern Kurdistan, and the well-handled operations there under Major-General Sir Thomas Fraser; but that is another story, worthy of a short military volume for all the systems of small wars that it illustrates—of the Lady Adela, and the Bazian Pass, and the new-found Kachin Regiment from the upper Irrawaddy that swaggered over a Kurdish city in their pride of victory and their alarming Kachin dahs.

It will suffice to say that in the middle of the hottest months the leading Agha attempted a *coup d'état*. With the aid of some adherents from the Persian border, the Kurdish levies were overpowered, their British officers and several sergeants—what's his name?—were seized, together with the civil officers, and a special rule under the Aghas declared.

Now, the Aghas who frequent these mountains are somewhat as the robber barons of the Middle Ages, save that they originally drew their influence from personal sanctity. Settling in small

villages, and accumulating the ecclesiastical tithe, they had gradually surrounded themselves with armed braves, and erected strongholds from which they bullied the country-side. Defying the Turk whenever they dared, the arrival of a provisional British control, light though it was, and welcome to the peasantry, was by no means welcome to the owners of a *schloss*.

Add to this the rumours that the departing shipping of demobilisation had magnified into British weakness, and it was small wonder that a border Agha should strike for his own hand, which he did, and failed, despite the hot waterless wastes that the troops had to pass in order to reach his hills, and the first victories over detachments.

Then while this Sulimanieh pother was being settled, lo ! after the manner of such occasions, the tribes in Central Kurdistan started their dance. To them there had also come tales of the seaward transports. They also had another reason. Before the Turkish inroad that followed the collapse of Imperial Russia, some fifty thousand Christian tribes, men, women, and children, their ox, and their ass, and everything that was theirs, had fled towards the British. The plains in the vicinity of Lake Urumiah and the mountains near Ararat were their habitation. Known as Nestorians, the name originally given in derision by the Church of Rome, they had held their own, especially the tribes on the hills, for over a thousand years. Headed by their Patriarch or Bishop Palatine, to whom the Turk from time immemorial had given some temporal power, they marched to join the British. Hunger, disease, and the empty cartouche-box had made them yield before the Crescent for the first time in history. Covered by militia battalions of their own, they had come to us in 1917, and had been nursed back to health by our organisations, and in the first days of arrival and epidemic by the rough but kindly hands of Nurse Thomas Atkins. One of the post-war problems then causing us much thought in 1919 was their repatriation. The way to do it was up the valleys of the greater Zab and the Khabur, and they had naturally spread stories of the glory and power in which they hoped to return, being too, man for man, better soldiers than the Kurds, and knowing it. Descended, as tradition has it, from the ancient Assyrians, and calling themselves the Assyrian Church, one of the Ancient Churches which, being outside the Roman Empire, had not attended the conference at Nicaea, they had never been under the jurisdiction, or in communion with, the Church of Rome.

Therefore, it may be well conceived, their hands were against

many. It was the rumours of their triumphant return that added to the unrest in Central Kurdistan, and the Aghas steadily fomented the feeling. Further, this district marched with the still Turkish Armenia, and was adjacent to Turkish propaganda. So, no doubt, the world being as it was, there was plenty of excuse for the Carduchi of those hills to throw themselves on to British levies and British outposts. Further, not far from Zakkho whitened the bones of an Armenian refugee caravan, butchered on the hill-slopes to make a Turkish holiday. A lively reminiscence of their own share in the knifing, and a rumoured vengeance therefore, with some story of a rescue of Armenian girls they had bought from the Turkish soldiery, was all in the air. Not much was needed, therefore, to set those hills aflame.

And it is a good border law that, since the fire of frontier hills aflame is given to spread, prompt counter-action is necessary. The only effective counter-stroke was to march horse, foot, and artillery from the moors and dales of Mosul into the hills of the Kurds. A force under Major-General Cassels was despatched into Central Kurdistan to capture the ringleaders, to rescue levy prisoners, and to pacify and reassure the villagers. It is not proposed to follow these actions either, but merely to bring the scene of my story on to the stage.

Cassels' brigades, chiefly infantry and pack-artillery, had entered the country, and were doing their work expeditiously. More than once had tribesmen, armed with all the weapons of modern war, hurled themselves, with both sword and rifle, on our bivouacs. One brigade had gone up towards the Sir Amadia, past pretty villages with poplars and English copses and almond and peach trees, and were camped over among glades and ravines, and the yellowing maples' dotted veil: a beautiful and a difficult country, gorges like the Khyber and glens like Killiecrankie, the hills covered with dwarf holly and oak on their precipitous sides that made the work of piquets and flankers far harder and far more dangerous than ever the hill-sides of Tirah.

This brigade was to cross the Sir Amadia and beat up the strongholds on the far side, and the commander thought fit to send a reconnaissance in some force to see if the pass and track were, by any manner of juggling with terms, practicable for his force. Now, it has been the military fashion of late years to laugh at a reconnaissance in force, beloved of the Wolseley age: but there are many occasions in half-civilised warfare when a reconnaissance in force alone will produce the information desired. And it was so that day

in Kurdistan. So the commander ordered a company of infantry, two mountain guns, with a section of sappers, to make one, and in charge of it went a major of engineers.

Now criticisms are odious, save as vehicles of instruction; but as this commander made two cardinal errors in the sending of this force it is as well that we enumerate them. In the first place a company of infantry is too small to have a section of artillery tacked on to it. When mountaineer enemy are about, a company of infantry will have all it can do to look after itself, and does not want to have strings of pack-artillery to hamper it. Guns are a great accessory, but only to a force that is large enough for such luxuries. And this every old officer on the frontier knows, or should know this many a year.

Mistake number two was the command. The major of engineers commanded the company of engineers with the brigade. He wished to be allowed to accompany his section on the reconnaissance. Most praiseworthy. He was the senior major, and he took command. He should not have been allowed to, even were he, which does not happen to many of his corps, most experienced in hill warfare against tribes. He had a technical job to do, which must take up his attention. He should only have been allowed to go on this understanding. The function of command is exercised by him who is nominated thereto. The result was soon enough in its proving. The little column wended its way up towards the range and the pass it was to probe. No doubt its piquets were duly placed on the hills above, save that one company cannot afford many piquets. It penetrated the narrow gorge, and it climbed the road which was a stairway, while the guns and sapper mules, a long train, even with a small detachment, jinked and rattled in the rear.

Presently the column breasted the pass and arrived at the col, halting in the thick scrub and dwarf oak on top, the guns remaining somewhat in rear. Not a Kurd had been seen, and the party were enjoying the cool breeze and the glimpse of distant hills and valleys below.

Suddenly, without warning, a heavy fire broke out on all sides. Alas! there were no piquets, and the column had collected on an unprotected, overlooked space. The few officers were killed almost immediately; the men broke for the nearest rock cover. The guns and some of the men turned, and made off down the pass. Frightened mules are hard to hold, and outside a pass is better than in. The men did their best, but without officers and assailed by invisible marksmen on all sides there was not much of a fight.

The guns and a few riflemen made their way out; but as both of the guns had lost some of their components, it was some time before one gun could be pieced together and come into action on a ridge at the opening of the pass. There they stayed till the mother column came looking for her chickens.

Away up in the head of the pass the dead lay thick in the noonday sun, and a few survivors had been taken prisoners, and were now in the hands of the Kurds, who gathered thicker round them.

The regiment from which the company had been drawn was one of the Frontier Force, one to whom surprise by mountaineers was unthinkable, yet the unthinkable had come to pass. Whether or no two years of *grande guerre* against the Turk had frosted the memory of the Shahur and the Tochi, whether the company commander had protested to the commander of the reconnaissance, will never be known. The force was small, the ground was difficult, perhaps the chapter of accidents seemed the easier protection. The men of the company consisted of Mohammedans of the Punjab and Sikhs. The Sikhs were a puzzle to their captors, a merciless crew, to whom captives were fair game. Captives of the faith, it is true, were entitled to terms, but no tender ruth for Kaffirs.

The leader of the Kurds stood on a ledge, a high felt cap on his head and a bright silk scarf around it. Two rifles, four bandoliers, and knives innumerable completed his armament. And before him were ranged the captives, a few Mohammedans, the remainder black-bearded Sikhs. A surviving N.C.O., a smart young Mohammedan *naik*, was addressed by a Kurd who had been an interpreter apparently with our own troops.

'What is your name?'

'Murad Ali Khan Ghakkar.'

'Shiah or Sunni?'

'Sunni.'

'The Agha knows that those men here on the right are Moslems, but who are these? Are they Moslems? They look like some uncouth Hindki unbelievers.'

And the *naik* looked at the Sikhs, and remembered that Sikh or Moslem was of no matter in the Frontier Force. To belong to the regiment was to be of one brotherhood. And he swallowed a mighty swallow, for there was fingering of knife edges around him.

'They are as good Moslems as I am,' quoth he. 'I will swear it on *El-Koran*. They are, it is true, uncouth; they come from a savage part of my country. But they are Moslems true.'

The Agha had a worked leather haversack over his shoulder, and from it he drew a Koran, bound in painted papier mâché covers—an illuminated Koran.

‘Will you swear,’ quoth he, ‘for I misdoubt their looks?’

‘I will swear,’ reiterated stoutly Murad Ali Khan Ghakkar. ‘If you don’t believe me, strip them, and you will see that they are as good Moslems as I.’

‘Nay, let him swear,’ quoth again the Agha, failing to call the bluff.

And then and there, with uplifted hand, that steadfast *naik*, to whom the faith of his regiment came first, swore that the black-bearded men were true and honest Moslems of the Sunni faith. And the knives went back into their sheaths, and the prisoners were led away and fed.

It was a lie of the blackest, one of those really good black lies that no recording angel dare enter, but to the Moslem’s heart it should have spelt damnation, save for an agricultural conscience that a frontier regiment had improved on.

That night the prisoners slept in a cave, and the eyes of the Sikhs followed their sponsor as those of a *chela* follows his *jhogi*.

But the race is not always to the swift, neither the battle to the strong. Next morning something very prompt happened. The Agha and his Kurdish men-at-arms had reckoned on the slows that may seize regular troops in the mountains, but their experience was that of Turkish regulars and of Turkish Bey and Bimbashi.

All night long the British force had marched and climbed far into the dewy night. Every path on the ridge had been seized, and the village on the hill-side in which the victors had sheltered bristled with bayonets in the morning.

It was a sadder Agha that slid down the hill-side from a back-door in a cottage, *minus* his rifles that hung behind the door, *minus* half his following and his black-bearded prisoners, while the British sons of burnt fathers were securing their prize, releasing their own men, and chaffing the angry and comely Kurdish girls of the village and a Gurkha piper with a Mackenzie plaid over his shoulder started ‘Hey, Johnnie Cope, are ye waking yet?’

Happily it was in my power to reward Murad Ali, one of those of whom the prophet Malachi has written ‘They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.’

A 'NOT UNBLESSED PILGRIMAGE.'

THE CARLYLES' MARRIED LIFE.

'To Jane Carlyle, this little book, little milestone in a desolate, confused, but not (as we hope) unblessed pilgrimage we make in common, is with heart's gratitude inscribed by her affectionate T. C.'
[Inscription in J.W.C.'s copy of 'Sartor Resartus.']

ABOUT a year ago I had the privilege of reading the originals of the recently published 'Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle to her Family,'—letters that even in the handwriting often reveal the mood of the writer, and are fascinating in the glimpses they give of the brilliant circle of 5 Cheyne Row. The chords of memory were struck in me; I recalled the wonder, not unmixed with awe, with which I, as a young girl, first gazed on Carlyle's inscription on her grave in the chancel of the Abbey Church of Haddington, with the questioning eyes of girlhood looking towards the fuller experiences of life, and marvelled that any man could have such a love for his wife. Later by some years came the saddened impression of the home life of the pair left in my mind by reading Froude's 'Life of Carlyle,'—an impression too common still with many.

The intense interest aroused in me by the intimate self-revelation of the shrewd, witty, and withal kindly personality of Mrs. Carlyle led me to attempt a study of her character as revealed not only in her own correspondence but also in the writings of her personal friends. These are mostly to be found in magazine and review articles of the 'eighties, and were written by them in the first heat of anger and dismay at the distorted account of the Carlyle household given by Froude. The study entailed the expenditure of much time and research, and the result will, I hope, show that the Carlyles really had an enduring love for each other which nobly stood every test. As far as possible I shall let their own words and those of their friends tell the story.

Jane Baillie Welsh was born in Haddington on July 14, 1801, the only child of Dr. John Welsh and Grace, his wife, also a Welsh, but unrelated. The doctor had a comfortable and refined home, and Jane, as an only child, had lavished on her all the attentions her parents could give. She was no ordinary child even in appearance, with her dark expressive eyes, dark curling hair, clear skin,

broad forehead, graceful figure, and an expression now playful, now sad. Many stories of her childish precocity are told by Carlyle in his *Reminiscences*. One will suffice. When she was about four years old her parents were lunching in a hotel. The waiter said 'And what would little Missie like?' to which she at once replied 'A roasted Bumbee.'

Her school life showed further precocity. Edward Irving, then a talented youth, was her first teacher and private tutor, and at nine years of age she could read Vergil, while at fourteen she wrote a tragedy and could versify with ease.

Her mother was a tall, good-looking woman of aquiline features, talented, romantic and capricious, so that sometimes mother and daughter jarred on each other. Her father, an enlightened man on educational matters, was idolised by her, and always influenced her for good. Unfortunately he contracted fever from a patient, and died when Jeannie was just eighteen.

She was never robust in health and, like most nervously constituted people, she daily used up her energy. In her own words, 'To say the truth, my whole life has been a sort of *puddling* as to health. Too much of schooling had'st thou, poor Ophelia.' She was fascinating, impulsive, brilliant, witty, sarcastic, educated as few girls then were, and something of an heiress, for her father died intestate, and she, by Scots Law, inherited his property of Craigenputtock. Apart from its income, her mother's resources were very small. There was always a superficial strain of hardness in Jane, but she was kind and just, and had ideas very alien to the *jeune fille* of her day. To her friend, Eliza Stodart, in March 1821, she writes from Haddington:

'Here I am once more at the bottom of the pit of dulness, hemmed in all round, straining my eyeballs, and stretching my neck to no purpose. . . . But I *will* "get out"—by the wife of Job, I *will*! . . . I must dwell in the open world, live amid life; but *here* is no life, no motion, no variety. It is the dimmest, deadiest spot (I verily believe) in the Creator's Universe.'

She goes on to tell of her 'wee existence,' and adds, 'I was very happy then! all my little world lay glittering in tinsel at my feet!'

Meantime Thomas Carlyle had left his schoolmastering at Kirkcaldy, and was doing literary work in Edinburgh. His friend, Edward Irving, took him for a walk to Haddington in June 1821,

and introduced him to Mrs. Welsh and Jane; so these two extraordinary characters met. The young men put up at the George Hotel, and in the evening Irving said to Carlyle: 'What would you take to marry Miss Augusta now?' (a lady just met). 'Not for an entire and perfect chrysolite the size of the terraqueous globe.' (Hearty laughter from Irving.) 'And what would you take to marry Miss Jeannie, think you?' 'Hah, I would not be so hard to deal with there, I imagine.' (Laughter.)

Carlyle then was obviously attracted, and he sent her some books he had promised. In due time she returned them, addressed to 'Mr. Carslile,' who wrote:

'With what hysterical speed I opened the grey cover! How I searched over the poor tomes! How I shook them! . . . and found "Miss Welsh's compliments to Mr. Carslile,"—a gentleman in whom it required no small sagacity to detect my own representative. . . . If there is any book I can get, or any service within the utmost circle of my ability that can promote your satisfaction in the slenderest degree, I do entreat you earnestly to let me know.' [The mis-spelling was not of set purpose, as one writer thinks. She spelt the town in the same way.]

Thus spoke Thomas, then twenty-five; and what said the lively Jane? To Miss Stodart in July 1821, after a dissertation on the 'Nouvelle Heloise,' she says:

'No lover will Jane Welsh ever find like St. Preux, no husband like Wolmar . . . and to no man will she give her heart and pretty hand who bears to these no resemblance. George Rennie! James Aitken! Robert MacTurk! James Baird!!! Robby Angus!—O Lord, O Lord! where is the St. Preux? Where is the Wolmar? . . . I have just had a letter from Thomas Carlyle: he too speaks of coming. He is something liker to St. Preux than George Craig is to Wolmar. He has *his* talents, *his* vast and cultivated mind, *his* vivid imagination, *his* independence of soul and *his* high-souled principles of honour. But then—Ah, these *buis*!—St. Preux never kicked the fire-irons, nor made puddings in his tea-cup.'

Again, early in 1822 she says:

'Mr. Carlyle was with us two days, during the greater part of which I read German with him. . . . He scratched the fender dreadfully. I must have a pair of carpet shoes and handcuffs prepared for him the next time. His tongue only should be left at liberty: his other members are most fantastically awkward.'

She ends 'I will be happier contemplating my "beau idéal" than a *real, substantial*, eating, drinking, sleeping, *honest* husband.'

In January 1823 she shows a cynical cast of mind. 'David S. is to be speedily married to Miss R.'s thousand pounds. *Espérance, ma chère!* when such women as Miss R. get Lieutenants, we shall have Generalissimos at least.'

In March 1823 she speaks of the influence that Carlyle has on her:

'Often at the end of the week, my spirits and my industry begin to flag: but then comes one of Mr. Carlyle's brilliant letters, that inspires me with new resolution, and brightens all my hopes and prospects with the golden hues of his own imagination. He is a very Phoenix of a Friend!'

A description of her at this time was given by the old Haddington servant, Betty, with whom, to the end, Mrs. Carlyle kept up an affectionate intercourse.

'When she was young, she was a fleein', dancin', licht-heartit thing, Jeannie Welsh, that naething wad hae dauntit, but she grew grave a' at ance. There was Maister Irving, ye ken, that had been her teacher, an' he cam aboot her. Then there was Maister—[Rennie?], then there was Maister Carlyle himsel', an' he cam tae finish her off like.'

It may be well here to speak of the Irving episode, of which I think far too much has been made. On meeting his old pupil again, grown up, he had fallen in love with her, but was by that time betrothed to Isabella Martin, daughter of the minister of Kirkcaldy. Jane sent him back to Isabella, as in honour bound, but she was rather cynical and bitter towards him. She is said to have remarked afterwards, 'There would have been no tongues, had Irving married me.' They were both hot-tempered, and there would probably have been pretty loud tongues in another sense; very likely he was happier with his more commonplace wife. Jane might have shaken his foundations, but Carlyle's were too solid, and it was she who gave way in the contact, by devoting her life to forwarding his work. It must always be kept in mind that she was barely twenty when she first met Carlyle, and he gradually displaced Irving in her affections. She owns in her letters that her standard of manhood was greatly improved, and that she found 'Love a far more inspiring thing than Ambition.'

That she was miserable at times is undeniable, but that was

really due to her highly-strung nature. She carried within herself the capacity both of great happiness and intense misery, but even taking her recurring physical suffering into consideration, the happiness outweighed by far the misery. Monotony she dreaded, as is evident from her letter quoted.

Carlyle, described by his mother as 'a lang sprawlin' ill put together thing' as a bairn, and on one occasion (afterwards a joke in the family) 'gey ill to deal wi', had his father's passionate temper and disregard of consequences. He was domineering, and in small matters lacked self-control, but he was devoted and generous in the extreme to his own folk, undertaking entirely the education of his brother John, afterwards Dr. Carlyle, when his own income was very uncertain. Long after, when offered the LL.D. by Edinburgh University, he declined, saying that if two Dr. Carlyles appeared at the Gate of Paradise at the same time, there might be some confusion!

During his courtship he got through Irving a tutorship to the Bullers that gave him £200 a year. It may here be said that all through life Carlyle had a genius for friendship (see the latest volume of 'Letters to Mill, Sterling, and Browning'), and was fortunate in his friends; he had voluntary helpers in J. S. Mill, Larkin, Neuberg, Gilchrist, Emerson, who looked after American rights for him, etc. The one who failed him after death was the one he trusted most, his literary executor, Froude.

A few extracts from the wonderful love letters will show the gradual change in Jane from a literary friendship, perhaps even a fresh pride in a new conquest, to a real and abiding love. They were two of the best letter writers of the nineteenth century. 'Jane,' said Mrs. Montagu (Irving's 'Noble Lady') later, 'everyone is born with a vocation, and yours is to write little notes.'

In reading the letters, one must bear in mind that her high spirit was rather saddened by the death of her father and the Irving episode, and that both lovers indulged much in invective and hyperbole. There is plenty of gaiety in hers, but her head always guided her heart. With criticism and raillery she spurred on his ambition. She also had desires for a literary career, and he says 'I shall yet stand a-tiptoe at your name,' but fate decreed that it was not as Jane Baillie Welsh, but as Jane Welsh Carlyle, she is known to fame, so that in giving up her wish and subordinating all desires to the furthering of his career she achieved it. Mr. Larkin, the voluntary secretary of Carlyle, asked her once why

she did not write. 'Oh, Mr. Larkin, one writer is quite enough in a house' was the reply.

The letters speak for themselves :

Jan. 1822.—*She* : 'If you cannot write to me, as if—as if you were married, you need never waste ink or paper on me more. . . . I have too little romance in my disposition ever to be in love with you or any other man ; and too much ever to marry without love.'

Feb. 1822.—*He* : 'The Graces cannot live under a sky so gloomy and tempestuous as mine : I lament their absence, since you lament it ; but there is no remedy.'

Oct. 1822.—*She* : 'Oh, if I had your talents, what a different use I would make of them. But I will not blame you, for you seem sufficiently sensible of the sinfulness of your own inactivity.'

Jan. 1823.—*She* : 'I never thought I should have come to wish myself born in a land of pigs and peat moss, and brought up among people, the prose of whose life (I have heard you say) is pork, and whisky the poetry ; but so it is. I envy you being a native of Annandale !' ; and in the next letter : 'Tell you all that lies upon my heart ! . . . Were I to tell you all or half, I should expect your next lecture by the carrier's wagon.'

May 1823.—*He* : 'God keep you, my own Jane ! I trust we were born for one another's good, not evil' ; and in July : 'We are both far too ambitious,—can we ever be happy ? One thing is certain : I *will* love you to the last breath of my life, come of it what may.'

Aug. 1823.—*She* : In fiery mood, annoyed by visitors in her grandfather's house, she dates her letter from 'Hell,' and in it says : 'I owe you much ! feelings and sentiments that ennoble my character, that give dignity, interest and enjoyment to my life. In return I can only love you, and *that* I do, from the bottom of my heart.'

He gains heart and writes :

'The only thing I know is that you are the most delightful, enthusiastic, contemptuous, affectionate, sarcastic, capricious, warmhearted, lofty-minded, half-devil, half-angel of a woman, that ever ruled over the heart of a man ; that I will love you, must love you, whatever may betide, till the last moment of my existence.'

She administers a douche in September :

'My Friend, I love you. . . . But were you my Brother, I would love you the same. . . . Your Friend I will be, your truest most devoted Friend, while I breathe the breath of life ; but your

Wife! Never, never! Not though you were rich as Croesus, as honoured and as renowned as you yet shall be.'

Sept. 1823.—*He*: 'I know very well you will never be my wife. Never! Never! I never believed it above five minutes at a time all my days.'

Sept. 1824.—*She* to Eliza Stodart: 'Who knows but I shall grow reasonable at last, descend from my ideal heaven to the real earth, marry, and—oh Plato—make a pudding?'

Jan. 1825.—*He*: 'Alas, my dearest, without deep sacrifices on both sides, the possibility of our union is an empty dream.'

Jan. 1825.—*She*: 'My heart is capable of a love to which no deprivation would be a sacrifice. . . . In the meantime . . . my affections are in a state of perfect tranquillity.'

A letter from Mrs. Montagu, to whom Irving had confided his love for Jane and who wrote to her with the quite mistaken idea of the necessity of her putting Irving out of her heart, precipitated a definite engagement. She visited Carlyle's people, and in July 1825, with Carlyle's approval, if not at his suggestion, she made over the life rent of Craigenputtock to her mother, so that it was they who had to face poverty, and not her mother.

She confessed to him that she had *once* loved Irving, and ends: 'Never were you so dear as at this moment when I am in danger of losing your affection, or what is still more precious to me, your respect.'

July 1825.—*She* (his letter not having arrived): 'Mr. Carlyle, do you mean to kill me? . . . You may be no longer mine, but I will be yours in life, in death, through all Eternity.'

Feb. 1826.—*He*: 'Alas! Jane, you do not know me; it is not the poor, unknown, rejected Thomas Carlyle that you know, but the prospective rich, known, and admired. . . . I do not love you? If you judge it fit, I will clasp you to my bosom and my heart, as my wedded wife, this very week; if you judge it fit, I will this very week forswear you forever. More I cannot do; but all this when I compare myself to you, it is my duty to do. I am yours, at your own disposal, for ever and ever.'

June 1826.—*She*: 'In the seventeen months that I have held myself your affianced wife, I have never for a single instant doubted the wisdom of my choice.'

In October 1826 she writes to her aunt a fine eulogy of Carlyle:

'Such then is this future husband of mine; not a *great* man according to the most common sense of the word, but truly great in its natural, proper sense; a scholar, a poet, a philosopher, a wise

and noble man, one who holds his patent of nobility from Almighty God, and whose high stature of manhood is not to be measured by the inch-rule of Lilliputs.'

This epistolary lovemaking was continued throughout life, in their frequent absences from each other. Meantime at Templand, her mother's home now, on October 17, 1826, they were married—this dainty Ariel with a strain of Puck in her, and this genius who, like most of his countrymen, was undemonstrative in the little attentions of life, although he showed the sincerity of his love in other ways. Mrs. Oliphant remarks: 'A more placid husband would no doubt have diminished her cares, and a more considerate one would have lightened the burden of them.' However everything was rosy at this time, and they passed eighteen happy months at Comely Bank, Edinburgh, where her charm as hostess attracted such men as Jeffrey, Sir W. Hamilton, Brewster, De Quincey, etc., and she wrote to her mother-in-law: 'My husband is so kind; so, in all respects, after my own heart.'

Literature was not a money-making profession, and with ebbing funds he turned his thoughts to Craigenputtock, where with his brother Alex. renting the farm they could live quietly and cheaply. Carlyle wrote: 'To her it was a great sacrifice, to me it was the reverse; but at no moment by a look did she ever say so—indeed I think she never felt so at all.'

They went in May 1828, and for a long time she was quite happy there. The occupations of which Froude makes so much were only those that any middle-class woman expects to have, and were necessary employment for her. She always had a servant for rough work, and she says herself, 'If I have an antipathy for any class of people, it is for *fine ladies*.' There was no such *mésalliance* as Froude believed.

They rode together, studied in the evenings, and life passed pleasantly enough. In November 1829 she wrote: 'I am happy here also, because Carlyle always likes me best *at home*, wherever that happens to be.' They were not far from Mrs. Welsh at Templand, and visits were exchanged with her and with Carlyle's people at Scotsbrig. Lord Jeffrey twice visited them, and they went to him in Edinburgh. He jokingly gave Carlyle good advice. 'Take care of the fair creature who has trusted herself so entirely to you. . . . You have no *mission* on earth . . . half so important as to be innocently happy,' and told him to bring 'his blooming Eve out of his "blasted paradise," and seek shelter in the lower world.'

In 1831 Carlyle decided to go to London to seek a publisher for 'Sartor Resartus.' Lord Jeffrey lent him £50, repaid in 1832. Mrs. Carlyle encouraged him : ' This is a work of genius, dear,' and in her copy he wrote : ' To Jane Carlyle, this little book, little milestone in a desolate, confused, but not (as we hope) unblessed pilgrimage we make in common, is with heart's gratitude inscribed by her affectionate T. C.' She was probably always the best literary agent her husband had, advancing his prospects by her wit and her fresh, youthful vivacity. Further, she never failed him in any crisis, and her cheerful courage nerved him to renewed endeavour.

She joined him in London later, and while she was there Carlyle's father died. ' O how good and tender she was ; nothing was wanting in her sympathy or in the manner of it,' he wrote.

The real object of their sojourn in London was unsuccessful, and they returned to their moorland home in April 1832, and till May 1834 were there, except for four months in Edinburgh in 1833. In June she wrote : ' My husband is as good company as reasonable mortal could desire.' A flying visit was made by Emerson in 1833, and this resulted in a life-long friendship, and in the financial success of Carlyle's books in America, at first far greater than in this country. ' I could not help,' said Emerson, ' congratulating him upon his treasure of a wife.'

A genius is necessarily a solitary soul, and Carlyle withdrew more into himself when in the agonies of composition. He praised her however, ' You with your priceless talent for silence,' but the spoken word of commendation was probably infrequent with him. ' You don't expect to be praised for doing your duty,' he said, possibly joking. ' But,' said she, ' I did though.' To quote Mrs. Oliphant's very just estimate :

' They were both of the order of those swordlike souls that wear out the scabbard. . . . They had no skin to speak of upon their quivering nerves. . . . They tormented each other, but not half so much as each tormented him or herself,' and with it all ' they were in the fullest sense of the word everything to each other, both good and evil, sole comforters, chief tormentors. He was " ill to hae, but waur to want."'

It was difficult at Craigenputtock to get books of reference, etc., and in 1834 she said gaily ' Let us burn our boats, take our furniture with us, and go to London.' He went first to find a house ; she followed, and they entered the house at 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea,

Chico, the canary, singing them into a new life. There they lived together for thirty-two years, and he for fifteen more.

They soon had a circle of distinguished friends, Leigh Hunt, a near neighbour, being one of the first. Coming once with some good news, Mrs. Carlyle kissed him, and he is said to have written 'Jenny Kiss'd Me':

'Jenny kiss'd me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in.
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in.
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have miss'd me,
Say I'm growing old, but add—
Jenny kiss'd me.'

J. S. Mill, the Sterlings, H. Martineau, Mazzini, Cavaignac, E. Darwin, and later Masson, Tennyson, Browning, Mrs. Oliphant, were only a few of the Chelsea circle. Irving came once before his death in 1834, and looking round said pathetically, 'You are like an Eve, and make a little Paradise wherever you are.'

Her chief aim was to keep Carlyle from those interruptions, small enough to ordinary people, but maddening to him; so we hear of contests to put down barking dogs, demon fowls that she 'had better shoot on principle, than he in a passion,' pianos, the Freischütz of cats, barrel organs, etc., all silenced in some way. The frequent changes of household arrangement for his greater convenience, her cleanings or 'earthquakes' were all done by choice when he was away. As she says in 1843 to him, 'Dearest, I take time by the pigtail, and write at night after post hours. . . . It is only I who can be "jolly" in such a mess of noise, dirt, and wild dismay.'

The famed sound-proof room, 'progressing so noisily overhead,' as she says, was constructed from outside when both were at home. Several times the workmen came through the ceiling of the upper rooms, once narrowly missing Mrs. Carlyle. 'Had he dislocated my neck,' she says, 'one of us would have been provided with a "silent apartment" enough, without further botheration.' 'How you have lain between me and these annoyances, wrapt me like a cloak against them, I know it well, whether I speak or not,' wrote Carlyle. It must be admitted that Carlyle carried into practice his watchword 'Entsagen,' renunciation, and sacrificed everything for his work, but his wife always put his work first,

and never wanted him to write merely for money. For years she had to exercise rigid economy, until his income began to improve, and the death of her mother in 1842 gave them Craigenputtock and its income of about £200 a year. Mrs. Carlyle had bequeathed it to Carlyle in 1825, and he left it to Edinburgh University for the John Welsh Bursaries.

In 1835 she wrote to his mother: 'I continue quite content with my bargain. I could wish him a little *less yellow*, and a little *more peaceable*.' This dyspepsia, referred to here, troubled him throughout life, made him miserable at times, unreasonable as a child, liable to strange fits of depression, and with a power of making mountains of trouble out of molehills. Sometimes he was so violent in his rages that he laughed at his own violence, and became good-humoured again. Both were kind at heart—he the more tender—all who knew him speak of Carlyle's practical sympathy with anyone in distress. In Leigh Hunt's 'Autobiography' there is a beautiful eulogy of his kindness of heart. *She* was harder, and when angry, as Carlyle said, 'had a tongue that could skin at a touch, like a cat's.' She was, says Mrs. Oliphant, 'A woman of genius scarcely inferior to that of her husband, of observation far more lively and keen, of whimsical humour and a gift of self revelation as rare as it is delightful . . . full of intolerance and patience, of kindness, irritability, quick anger, enthusiasm, cynicism; all the most opposed and antagonistic qualities.' *She understood Carlyle, gave him every encouragement to do his work well, and from no one did he get greater appreciation than from his own wife.*

An incident showing the nobility of soul of both is the way in which they received Mill's distressed intimation of the burning of the manuscript of the first volume of the 'French Revolution.' 'We must not let Mill know what this means to us,' and of £200 offered, only £100 was accepted, the actual outlay on the house when Carlyle was writing it; yet he had no notes, did not recall a single sentence, and was badly needing money.

Her health, never good, became worse, and she suffered from acute neuralgia and sleeplessness. In 1836 she wrote: 'I myself have been abominably all winter, though not writing so far as I know for the press.' To raise money, friends arranged lectures by Carlyle, which were very successful; but after the last one in 1839 she wrote: 'Unless he can get hardened to that trade, he certainly ought to discontinue it, for no gain or *éclat* that it can yield is compensation enough for the martyrdom it is to himself,

and through him to me. . . . He remains under applause, that would turn the head of most lecturers, haunted by the pale ghost of last day's lecture "shaking its gory locks at him," till next day's arrived to take its place and torment him in turn—very absurd.'

A description of him about this time is given by Mr. Brookfield. 'The form of his face is like that portrait of Count d'Orsay's you have seen. But complexion very coarse, and general appearance "solid in thick shoes." As tall as I about—and certainly no less ungainly—a hearty laughter with discoloured teeth—very broad Scotch—talks not unlike his writing—unreserved—unaffected of course—a leetle shy and awkward—but very likeable.' Sir Charles Gavan Duffy says that Carlyle was genial as a rule. 'No one was readier to indulge in badinage and banter; a smile was much more familiar to his face than a frown or a cloud.' The newly discovered crayon drawing by Maclise shows him to have had a pleasant expression and very fine eyes.

In 1837 Mrs. Carlyle had gone to Clifton with the Sterlings (he, the leader writer of *The Times*), and she sent an amusing letter to Carlyle:

'I furnish, as it were, the sugar and ginger which makes the alkali of the one and the tartaric acid of the other effervesce into a somewhat more agreeable draught; for the effervescing of these people! To say the least, "it is very absurd." But I shall keep all my stock of *biographic notices* to enliven our winter evenings.

'Well then, it is an absolute fact that his Whirlwindship and I rode to the top of Malvern Hill, each on a live donkey! Just figure it! with a Welsh lad whipping us up from behind, for they were the slowest donkies, though named in defiance of all probability, *Fly* and *Lively*. "The devil confound your donkies!" exclaimed my vivacious companion. . . . "they are so stupidly stubborn that you might as well beat on a stick." "And isn't it a good thing, they be stubborn, sir?" said the lad. "As being you see they have no sense; if they wasn't stubborn, they might be for taking down the steep, and we want no accidents, sir." "Now," said I, "for the first time in my life, I perceive why Conservatives are so stupidly stubborn. Stubbornness, it seems, is a succedaneum for *sense*." A flash of indignation—then in a soft tone, "Do you know, Mrs. Carlyle, you would be a vast deal more amiable, if you were not so damnably clever."

The following letter, showing quite a different mood, is given in the new volume of 'Letters to Mill, Sterling, and Browning,'

and was written to John Sterling in 1838. 'Meliora Latent' ('Better things lie hidden') was the motto on the seal at the end of a gold pencil-case given to Carlyle by Kitty Kirkpatrick.

'MY DEAR MENTOR,—Would to Heaven, I had anything to tell you of myself which you would like to hear. But alas, as Edward Irving used to say with a wae look, when he was about to write "Pessime" on my tasks, devoting me, poor innocent "child of his intellect," to a sound whipping. "I am sorry for you, Jane, but I must be truthful," then down went the fatal word, and the whipping followed, as sure as death. So now, come what come may, I also must be truthful, and declare to you honestly that within as without, the "meliora" still "latent," nay, that very often the whole faith of me is hardly adequate to believe that they *are* at all. This is a "pessime" that you will think deserves worse than whipping; but you will *feel* nevertheless that it is not you that could hurt a hair of my head. I know your heart is well affected towards me, and when you say hard things to me, that it is as the man says in the Play: "Because I love you, I study how I may best break your heart." This is the comfortablest theory of all your scoldings and so, by Heaven's blessing, I will keep it.'

A happier one, of November 1838, told Mrs. Carlyle, sen., that 'Carlyle is not so desperately ill to deal wi', as you and I have known him, and has always a good harl o' health at mealtimes.'

Still it was not easy always to be cheerful in the company of a man who greeted her remark on returning from a party, 'O we have had such a happy evening,' with a sepulchral 'Happy?' and who replied to Leigh Hunt's saying, 'Look up there, look at that glorious company [the stars] that sings with infinite voices an eternal song of Hope,' with 'Eh, it's a sair sicht,' probably exasperated with a surfeit of such flowery speeches. Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, who had seen him in many circumstances, says:

'He was easily disturbed, indeed, by petty troubles when they interfered with his work, never otherwise. Silence is the necessary condition of serious thought, and he was impatient of any disturbance which interrupted it. It has been a personal pain to me in recent times to find among honourable and cultivated people a conviction that Carlyle was hard, selfish and arrogant. I knew him intimately for an entire generation . . . and I found him habitually serene and considerate. . . . This is the real Carlyle,—a man of generous nature, sometimes disturbed on the surface by trifling troubles, but never diverted at heart from what he believed to be right and true.'

Mrs. Carlyle went out into society often, and had plenty of friends. Duffy describes her to his wife, 'She is one of the most natural, unaffected, fascinating women I ever encountered, and O'H. and P. declare that they would rather cultivate her acquaintance than the philosopher's. She is no longer handsome, but full of intellect and kindness blended gracefully and lovingly together.'

The death of her mother from a stroke occurred in 1842, and from that time Carlyle, who hated entering a shop (she had even bought his clothes, until a blue coat with yellow buttons, that she ordered, and that made him "an ornament to society in every direction," she says, caused him to doubt her taste in dressing him), gave her birthday gifts, etc., as her mother had done, and they continued her mother's pensions to old servants. They also became friendly with Geraldine Jewsbury and with Lady Harriet Baring, afterwards Lady Ashburton, a lady always very kind to them both. Mrs. Carlyle evidently liked Lady Harriet, though she said that Lady H. had a genius for ruling, and she had a genius for not being ruled; at any rate she often visited Lady H. without Carlyle. Lady Harriet was a brilliant woman, not so gifted as Mrs. Carlyle, but, aided by her rank in society, she gathered round her the cream of the intellect of the time, and she undoubtedly had charm. From about 1846 Mrs. Carlyle suffered more acutely from neuralgic pains and insomnia, and she had recourse to morphine and other drugs, the effect of which is to cause delusions. During that time, when, Sir J. Crichton Browne says, she suffered from cerebral neurasthenia, and she herself feared madness, she made Lady H. the peg on which to hang complaints. When her health improved, the complaints ceased. Larkin says that Carlyle's desire was towards a public life, and he went to the Ashburtons' because he met there the people he wanted to know. The death of Sir R. Peel put an end to his aspirations in that direction. Had the matter been openly discussed between the Carlyles, all would have been cleared up, but where Mrs. Carlyle should have been outspoken she was reticent, and she wrote her irritation when reticence would have been a wiser and indeed a more loyal proceeding. One admires Carlyle's attitude; he was puzzled, but uttered no complaints.

In 1844 she wrote:

'It is curious how much more uncomfortable I feel without you. I am always wondering since I came here, how I can, even

in my angriest mood, talk about leaving you for good and all, for to be sure, if I were to leave you to-day on that principle, I should need absolutely to go back to-morrow to see how you were taking it.'

And again :

'I am more content with you than I choose to express, for fear of your getting vain upon it, and giving yourself *airs*.'

In 1846 :

'I have been here for a week with Lady Harriet Baring . . . a very clever woman and very loveable besides, whom it is very pleasant to live with,'

while to Carlyle she wrote :

'I will try to believe, O why cannot I believe it once for all? that with all my faults and follies I *am* "dearer to you than any earthly creature." It is sad and wrong to be so dependent for the life of my life on any human being. If I have to live another life on any of the planets, I shall take precious good care not to hang myself round any man's neck either as a locket or a millstone.'

And in the next month :

'Often as I have pained you first and last, I *never* caused you intentional pain, so far as I can remember, and I cannot fancy that I should ever be so "far left to myself" as to do *that*.'

In all the complaints, her hyperbolic expressions and her dramatic power of description have to be discounted. 'I gin to think I sold myself, for very little cas,' she put in her Journal, while Carlyle, quite unconscious of the cause of her displeasure, but bewildered, wrote, 'Oh my dearest, how little I can make thee know of me, whom nothing can divide from me.'

To this period belong many of the letters to her cousins, Helen and Jeannie Welsh, a selection of which was published in the CORNHILL. 'Babbie,' as Jeannie was called, was for some months at Cheyne Row, after Mrs. Welsh's death. Both Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle were very fond of her, and readers may be interested in the following two letters of Carlyle, written to her, and unpublished as yet. They show such a kindly, affectionate humour, a phase of his character somewhat unfamiliar. They are given in full.

'Tremadoc, Carnarvonshire,
'29 July, 1843.

'DEAR COUSIN JEANNIE,—We have got across Snowdon, and proceeded under various auspices, especially under very bad weather, thus far; and now to-morrow morning we are about to turn round for Carnarvon, and after that towards Liverpool; where finally we hope to arrive by the *Ayrshire Lassie* or some other obliging steamer on the evening of Monday. We will come direct to Maryland Street, and the kind little cousin there. Our Doctor, I believe, will go back to his "Feathers," and I at present seem to feel as if I should rest better in my big room for a pair of days than anywhere else. We shall have to go to the Paulets—could you undertake to appoint Tuesday for that, or Wednesday at latest? I think the Annan Steamer sails about Thursday. I am horribly tired of tourifying, and want immensely to be at rest somewhere.

'I add not another word this night, but my love to Cousin Jeannie, and all the other cousins, and am always the good Baby's

'Most devoted

'T. CARLYLE.

'We are in the house of Mr. Chorley here, who sits looking at me while I write.'

'Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan,
'Saturday 5 Aug., 1843.

'DEAR COUSIN JEANNIE,—Very probably our Doctor gave you some account of my embarkation; what a wretched, sleepy, muddy, confused piece of dim, drowsy squalor it was: nevertheless, thanks to the good bright sunshine, and the silence of all human babblement and business that could concern me, I got along unexpectedly well, and made on the whole an average voyage of it. What ought not to be forgotten, is that Alick's man had done his full duty to the luggage and message, delivering both to the Captain in a most punctual manner—as I discovered towards night when near Annan: the Steward and most other persons had been asleep when the said luggage and message had been received by the Captain; at my arrival, the Captain was gone to sleep, the sailor in charge was nearly altogether drunk, and the steward, only half awake, in that dim element, had never heard of me before! A bed and berth, too, had been secured for me, as I discovered when near Annan! The remedy is, no man should go in these vehicles except by day.

'Having arrived here, I decide with my whole soul and body on *lying down to sleep* for a moderate while! It is a thing I have pressing need of. Farther is not yet decided.

'As for you, good Babby, I think you should hasten off to Helensburgh while the weather is good, while at least the day is long, and there "enjoy Nature" a little,—and if you have any leisure at all, read "in the works of your parent" till you have completed them!

'Pray give that letter to our Doctor in the meanwhile. In his uncertainty he named Maryland Street as his Post Office. And forget not hearty compliments to your Brother Alick my kind landlord, and Brother John who is too unwilling to sing. Among the multitudes of things that begin to dawn on me into distinctness out of the confusion of the last four weeks, I do not think there will be a prettier little spectacle anywhere, or "image of the mind," than that of a certain little cousin of mine, whom you poor foolish child *know* nothing about, tho' living so close to her!

'And so be a good girl, and may a blessing always be with you, dear little Jeannie.

'Your affectionate

'T. CARLYLE.'

Her letters to Helen and Babbie are happy for the most part, showing that she was only miserable at times, when too much alone. Here is one where Carlyle is teasing her. Two ladies were jealous of Mrs. Carlyle.

'Carlyle is making himself very merry at what he calls "*the judgement* come upon me," and calls me oftener than "Jane" or "My Dear" "*Destroyer of the Peace of Families!*" This morning as I was sitting very half-awake over my coffee, he suddenly exclaimed—"just to look at you there, looking as if butter would not melt in your mouth, and think of the profligate life you lead!" As John Carlyle would say "*it is very absurd.*"'

He was only retaliating, for Caroline Fox says:

'She plays all manner of tricks on her husband, telling wonderful stories of him in his presence, founded almost solely on her bright imagination; he, poor man, panting for an opportunity to stuff in a negation. . . . They are a very happy pair.'

In 1849 she revisited Haddington, staying incognito at the George Hotel. The beadle recognised her, and was to bring her the key of the churchyard early in the morning. She was before him and climbed the wall. An old gentleman in the train whom she knew did not at first recall her, but said that if she was the lady whom he had seen in the morning climbing the wall, she must be Jeannie Welsh, for no one else would have done that.

To John Forster, in 1850, she wrote :

'My Husband may be little—too little—*demonstrative* in a general way ; but at all rates he is very *steadfast* in his friendships ; and as for me, I am a little model of constancy, and all the virtues ! including the rare gift of knowing the value of my blessings *before I have lost them.*'

He was demonstrative enough in the written word of praise to her, as in this letter of 1850, after viewing the changes she had made in some of the rooms :

'O Goody, Goody, incomparable artist, Goody, it is really a series of glad surprises . . . all good and best, my bonny little Artistkin. Really it is clever and wise to a degree, and I admit it is pity you were not here to show it me yourself, but I shall find it all out too. Thank you, thank you, a thousand times.'

She herself truly said : 'We both have a skin too thin for the rough purposes of life.' Carlyle was at another nadir of suffering ('rue mental agony in his ain inside' as they termed it after the words of a servant)—they had entered into 'the valley of the shadow of Frederick' and remained in it for thirteen years. Mrs. Carlyle said to Moncure Conway that she wished Frederick had died as a baby.

In 1853, at Christmas, Carlyle's beloved mother died, and his wife was a great and an understanding comfort to him. Between the old lady and her 'highly original daughter-in-law,' as Jane called herself, there had been an excellent camaraderie. This is shown in the following letter, written after Carlyle's return from a visit to Scotsbrig :

'You know the saying "it is not lost what a friend gets," and in the present case it must comfort you for losing him. Moreover you have others behind, and I have *only him* in the whole wide world to love me, and take care of me, poor little wretch that I am. Not but that numbers of people love me after their fashion, far more than I deserve, but then *his* fashion is so different from all these, and seems alone to suit the crotchety creature that I am. Thank you then for having in the first place been good enough to produce him into this world, and for having in the second place made him scholar enough to recognise my various excellencies, and for having in the last place sent him back to me again to stand by me in this cruel east wind.'

In 1856 Lady Ashburton, who was going to the Highlands, kindly offered to take them with her as far as Edinburgh, free of cost. The offer was gladly accepted. She engaged the Queen's Saloon, and she and her maid—Lady Ashburton was ill—travelled in one section, and Lord Ashburton and Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle and the doctor in the other. Possibly Mrs. Carlyle remained with the gentlemen by choice. An offer to take her back to London, and communicated to her by Carlyle, was refused. 'Pray make my thanks for the offer, but though a very little herring, I have a born liking to hang by my own head.' He was not going, and therefore she would not be travelling as part of his luggage 'without self responsibility.' She changed her mind later, but it was too late. Carlyle would not reopen the subject, and so the herring was, on that occasion, left hanging by her own head.

In 1857 Lady Ashburton died. When Jane was ill and depressed, she had made her the excuse for complaints; with the second Lady Ashburton she was always very friendly, her own mental health being better.

Mr. Henry Larkin had offered his services to Carlyle, and was invaluable in making indexes, summaries, etc. 'A man to thank Heaven for, as I gratefully acknowledge,' said Carlyle. Mrs. Carlyle teased him, 'It is a comfort to have stupid people about you sometimes.' 'Only mad people and fools run after Carlyle'—a remark like one she made earlier that Carlyle was fated to be 'the nucleus of all the mad people of his generation.' This is an ironic revenge on the man who said that the inhabitants of these islands were mostly fools. 'God bless me, I was not the first to call them that!' he once said to his nephew Alexander. Perhaps he was only the most emphatic!

To Mr. Larkin, Mrs. Carlyle wrote in 1858:

'I am not going home this week either. So that blessed Dog [Nero] must just console himself with the sparrow [a stray nestling]. It is very dreary spending one's time coughing alone, in that House of Cheyne Row . . . *very dreary*. And why should I do it? When I am not needed for "the cares of bread" (as Mazzini calls housekeeping) or other cares of buttons or of *mislaid papers*.' And a few days later, 'Oh Mr. Larkin, what a life you have! It is a foretaste of the sort of thing you will have to stand when married! I am not to be home on Saturday. . . . After all I couldn't have trimmed my bonnet on a Sunday! I, the lineal descendant of John Knox and of John Welsh, the Covenanter.'

The next month she asked him to go and see after Carlyle, 'and be a mother to him, poor babe of genius, till I come.'

Two servants were got for her instead of the one 'general' she had always preferred, and in a way increased her troubles of management. She was very sleepless, and often Carlyle disturbed her unknowingly by 'gae'in staverin' aboot the hoose at night,' as one of their Scotch servants said, and 'when he has broken sleep, and I no sleep at all, it is sad work here, I assure you,' she said.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilchrist, both very delightful people, lived next door. Mrs. Gilchrist said that she enjoyed a chat 'with lively Jane Carlyle, who possessed charming audacity, and winning gaiety of manner.' To the Gilchrists she revealed her method of managing the babe of genius who would shoot Irishmen at sight for not working, but who wept at the account of the execution of the assassin Buranelli; who said that Nero was no use, and should be destroyed, and was overheard condoling with the old dog in the garden; who usually called her a fool for suggesting any improvements in the proofs of 'Frederick,' but ended by taking her advice.

To Mrs. Gilchrist, in 1859, from Humble, Aberdour, she wrote:

'Certainly between ourselves, I am not sensible of having gained an atom of strength, either bodily or mental, since I left Chelsea! And yet; what a difference between the dead wall one looks out on in Cheyne Row, and the "view" from our windows here, unsurpassed I am sure by the Bay of Naples or any other view on earth! . . . One *ought* to be *well* here—and now that one has a "cuddy" (donkey) "all to one's self" (as the children say), to *walk* about on the four legs of; one's two own legs being *no go*, one ought to admit one has everything needed for happiness—indeed except one thing—the *faculty of being happy*.

'Mr. Carlyle is much pleased with the place and the "soft food" it yields for himself—and horse—and as he hardly *works* at all, he would be much better—if he didn't, as he always does in "the country," take health *by the throat* (as it were); *Bathing* as if he were a little boy in the Serpentine, *walking* as if he had seven league Boots, and riding like the "Wild Huntsman."

This is rather like the remark made in Larkin's hearing, when Goethe was quoted 'like a star, unhasting and unresting.' 'Ah,' said Mrs. Carlyle, 'Carlyle is always hasting, and never resting.'

He was not so unobservant as she thought, however, for in a letter to his doctor brother in 1858 he mentioned a pain below her heart that recurred, and was evidently giving him great anxiety.

Mrs. Carlyle, meantime, retained all her caustic wit. 'When I was young and charming,' she wrote, 'men asked me about myself. Now they compensate to themselves for the want of charm in my company by using me as a listener to their egotism.'

A vignette of the author of 'Hero Worship at Home' was given to Mr. Gilchrist in July 1861.

'A thousand thanks for your kind thought about us! tho' fated to remain "a devout imagination" on your part! We are no longer on the Farmhouse quest,—"*anything But!*"' (as my maid says). In fact Mr. Carlyle is become so enamoured of the retirement he enjoys—beside the water barrel, under ten shillings worth of calico—that I don't think a farmhouse even within a stone cast of *the sea*, warranted free from cocks, dogs, and donkies would tempt his imagination! And certainly on the principle of "*letting Well be*"—"letting sleeping Dogs lie"—and that sort of thing, for nothing in the world would I unsettle him, when he is so peaceable! Just come and see; the next time you are up! . . . I went to see Fechter the other night and found myself between Lewes and Miss Evans [George Eliot]! by Destiny, and not by my own Deserving. . . . Poor Soul! there never was a more absurd miscalculation than *her* constituting herself an improper woman. She looks Propriety personified—oh so *slow!*'

A good sketch of her at this date is given in a letter of Mrs. Oliphant:

'I have had a visit from Mrs. Carlyle who is looking very feeble and picturesque, but as amusing as ever, and naturally has been taking away everybody's character, or perhaps I ought to say throwing light on the domestic relations of the distinguished people of the period. I was remarking upon the eccentricity of the said relations, and could not but say that Mr. Carlyle seemed to be the only virtuous philosopher we had. Upon which his wife answered "My dear, if Mr. Carlyle's digestion had been stronger, there is no saying what he might have been.'

This was the kind of outrageous remark that her strain of Bohemianism caused her to make, and that obviously no one would believe. She was all tenderness when one of Mrs. Oliphant's children took a convulsion, and when two of Mrs. Gilchrist's children and her husband had fever of which Mr. Gilchrist died, she, ill herself, was moved with anxiety to help. 'Is there anything I can do or Mr. Carlyle do? Can I write any letters for you? You need only give me the addresses. Can I send anywhere? Get

anything? Have you money on hand? Oh do use me some way,' and later, after Mr. Gilchrist's death, 'Are we still to go on not seeing each other,—you in sorrow, I in sickness; with just a partition between us,—of no use to each other at all?'

In 1863 an unfortunate accident occurred. She was knocked by a cab against the kerb, and as her arm was helpless from neuritis, she could not save herself, and lacerated the sinews of one thigh. On reaching home, she asked for Mr. Larkin, saying that Carlyle, with his nervous anxiety, would drive her mad. He heard, however, and helped to carry her to her room, where for weeks she endured what, even for her, was a martyrdom of pain. She forced herself about again, leaning on a stick, as anxiety was hindering Carlyle's work. Larkin says that she herself had no real hope of getting better, and when eventually she was able to go to St. Leonards he carried her to the invalid carriage—a horrible thing into which she had to be put feet first—and she was light as a child. She had become a mere shadow. Afterwards she went to her dear friend, Mrs. Russell, at Thornhill, and wrote to her husband, to whom she now clung more than ever, 'Oh, my dear, I am very weary—my agony has lasted long.' She returned worn to a shadow, but with her spirit bright as ever, and as Carlyle says, the last act, full of pain as it was, and with death in it, was much happier. He studied her comfort in every way. Of his own initiative he got a brougham for her, and in this—his finest gift to her—bought to prolong her life, she ended it.

She was lovingly tender to old Betty, who had lost her invalid son, and longed to put her arms round her neck and comfort her. Both these arms became useless. She had learnt to write with the left hand, but some of her letters had to be finished by the hand of another. In 1865 '*Frederick*' was finished, a book that had caused its only begetter and his wife much travail of soul. She had called the thirteen years 'the valley of the shadow of Frederick' and spoke of its finish as their 'Return from the Thirty Years' War.'

A significant reproof was given to Carlyle for leaving her miserable letters from Holm Hill 'daddin' about the room,' and she threatened to write him no more. What would she have said to the publication of these letters?

The story of Carlyle's election as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University is well known. In March 1866 he left, in company with Tyndall, to give his Rectorial Address. She was, as she

said, 'tattered to fiddlestrings' with anxiety, and remained behind not to hinder him by her weakness. They parted lovingly. She had advised him to speak extempore. Tyndall wired that the speech was 'A perfect triumph.' 'Oh God bless John Tyndall in this world and the next,' she exclaimed. On Tyndall's return, she saw him, and heard all about the speech. Carlyle had gone to visit his sister, but was returning soon. She went to Mrs. Oliphant, at Windsor, for a day and a night's rest, and arranged a tea-party for April 21. On the 19th Carlyle wrote to her that *his hurt ankle was slow in mending—a letter she never read.* On the 21st she wrote her daily letter to him, posted it (it reached him *sixteen hours after her death*), and went for her daily drive. In Hyde Park her little dog was hurt by a passing carriage; she sprang out and *lifted it in beside her—her last act.* The old coachman, becoming alarmed, asked a passer-by to look, and she was sitting with her hands folded in her lap, dead. She was taken to St. George's Hospital, and when Froude, Geraldine Jewsbury, and Blunt went there, the little dog was waiting patiently the pleasure of the mistress who would never call it more. Count Reichenbach took it, and gave it a home for Mrs. Carlyle's sake. It was probably *his daughter who said to her, 'I think, Mrs. Carlyle, a many, many peoples love you very dear.'* The one bright thing is that she died in the joy of knowing that *Carlyle's genius was at last recognised by his own University.*

Her last letters are very happy. The last she wrote, except to Carlyle, was to Moncure Conway, and in it she says:

'Indeed, by far the most agreeable part of this flare-up of success to my feeling, has been the enthusiasm of personal affection and sympathy on the part of his friends. I haven't been so fond of everybody and so pleased with the world since I was a girl, as just in these days when reading the letters of his friends, your own included. . . . I am in a hurry, but couldn't refrain from saying "Thank you, and all good be with you."'

Mrs. Oliphant received the guests, and made the sad explanations, while the brilliant hostess lay dead above, her face calm and majestic, illumined by the light of two candles. At her first London party, her mother had decked the table with an extra supply of candles, and Jane had economically removed two, thereby causing distress to her mother. She remorsefully dedicated them to the use to which they were now put.

She was buried beside her much loved father in the ruined Chancel of the Abbey Church of Haddington, and on the night of her funeral Carlyle paced the garden till long after midnight. Ever in passing the place in Hyde Park where she died he took off his hat, and stood reverently silent, the tears sometimes streaming down his face. Would Carlyle have been the man we know without his Jeannie Welsh? Emphatically no!

He never after did any great work, though Mary Aitken, his niece, afterwards Mrs. Alex. Carlyle, was a loving companion to him; he grew composed and even cheerful, though he spoke of himself as 'perhaps the saddest of all the sons of Adam.' As a memorial to his wife, and a satisfaction to himself, he prepared the 'Reminiscences,' without definite idea of publication; certainly, he expressly said, not for immediate publication and not without careful editing. Later he appointed his brother John, John Forster, and Froude his executors (Froude, he told Tennyson, because of 'his reticence.' Oh, the irony of it!). Only Froude remained alive when he died in 1881, and within a month of his death Froude published the 'Reminiscences,' unedited, and full of mistakes in transcription. A storm of controversy arose, increased by the publication of the 'Life' and of 'Mrs. Carlyle's Letters.' One wonders a little now, why the pathos of the writing was not evident to all. The word remorse, too, connoted to Carlyle biting sorrow, not the ordinary meaning, and that was forgotten. Yet Larkin, who knew him so intimately for ten years, wrote:

'My first feeling was that, if I had never known him personally, I should never have wished to know him. But I sincerely thanked God I had *really known him*; far too well not to be able to distinguish his own better self from any such distempered nightmares of his sorrow-stricken heart as those which his readers are now on every hand either angrily or sorrowfully discussing.'

Froude, in a pet, offered in *The Times* (after the publication of the 'Reminiscences') to give back all the Carlyle papers to Mrs. A. Carlyle, an offer at once accepted, but he withdrew it, and even claimed the papers. This is set out in full in 'The Nemesis of Froude,' by Alexander Carlyle, M.A., and Sir J. Crichton Browne.

In the biography, said Tyndall, 'Froude damaged Carlyle, and damned himself.'

We are perhaps too far distant in time to judge, but the words of their personal friends are significant.

Professor Masson, after discussing Froude's treatment of Carlyle, said :

' In another matter, however, in which Mr. Froude exercised the same indiscretion, the damage is not likely to be so reparable. If Carlyle had a right to leave himself for dissection, even he had no right to leave his wife also for dissection. . . . With unlimited powers to omit what he chose in Mrs. Carlyle's letters and other memorial papers . . . Froude has made free with those most secret self-communings of Mrs. Carlyle's spirit in its hours of solitude which she had kept under lock and key from Carlyle himself. . . . Let it be supposed that Carlyle had given *his* sanction, had Mrs. Carlyle given hers ? Sanction ! I knew the lady, and, if there can be such a thing as indignation in the unseen world over aught that passes below, O what a face I see, what a voice I hear, as *she* looks down on this transaction ! '

About Mrs. Oliphant's defence, Masson said : ' A woman spoke out here, where men were too silent ; she spoke the truth in defence of her friend and of her sex ; and there has been and can be no sufficient answer.'

This is what Mrs. Oliphant wrote :

' Which of us could bear that pitiless revelation ? . . . Mrs. Carlyle . . . has had a cruel fate since the death of her husband deprived her of her last bulwark against that Nemesis known amongst men by the name of Froude. Her fate is all the harder that she really has done nothing to deserve it. She narrated freely all the events of her life as they occurred, according to the humour of the moment and the gift that was in her : which was a very rare and fine gift, but one that naturally led to an instinctive seizing of all possible dramatic effects, and much humorous heightening of colour and deepening of interest. Her power of storytelling was extraordinary, as well as the whimsical humour that took hold of every humorous incident, and made out of a walk in the streets a whole amusing Odyssey of adventure ; and it was one of the chief amusements of her house and her friends. . . . She was the proudest woman—as proud and tenacious of her dignity as a savage chief. And of all things in the world, to be placed on a pedestal before men as a domestic martyr, an unhappy wife, the victim of a harsh husband, is the last she would have tolerated. . . . No woman of this generation, or of any other we are acquainted with, has had such desperate occasion to be saved from her friends.'

This is a reference to Geraldine Jewsbury, who, romantically

inclined, supplied Froude with stories mostly inaccurate, and to Froude himself, who was so indiscreet in what he published.

It is interesting to quote Mrs. Carlyle's own words here, in a letter to Mr. Scot Skirving.

'How you will *like* me when you see me, heaven knows. *Realised ideals* are always dreadfully precarious. Nor do I remember the least in the world what sort of a sketch I gave you of myself. . . . Most likely it was wide of the mark; would depend more on *how I had slept* the previous night, than on "the fact of things."'

And to another:

'It is not only a faculty with me, but a necessity of my nature to make a great deal out of nothing.'

Mrs. Gilchrist, speaking to William Rossetti, said that she had the intention of writing a true account of the pair she knew so well; but her own death prevented her from carrying this out. She wrote, however, to Burroughs about his 'Carlyle,' 'May it silence the host of little whippersnappers who are crowing so loud here over what they take to be the humiliation of a great and proud spirit in the Froude Confessional!'

Augustine Birrell says that Froude should have read the 'Reminiscences' in tears and burnt them in fire, for 'between the Carlyles and Mr. Froude there flowed both Tweed and Trent, and the history of the whole world.' That is probably the explanation. Froude could not understand this extremely Scotch couple, and the amount of give and take in the married life of the pair. 'Bitin' and Scratchin' is Scotch folk's Courtin'' says the proverb. Mrs. Carlyle had a gipsy strain in her which may have accounted for her very quick temper, but had any other person said in her hearing what she herself said about Carlyle, he or she would have had short shrift. Larkin, who saw them daily for many years, said that he never heard an angry word between them. She teased him, as when she made April Fools of both Carlyle and Larkin, rejoicing greatly at bringing down two such philosophers with one stone, and she enjoyed saying rather outrageous things to see their effect. Knight tells how, after some of Carlyle's dicta, she said, 'O Tom, you are so eccentric!' and he retorted, 'Yes, but can you find my centre?'

Charlotte Cushman, speaking of tea-time at Cheyne Row, describes Mrs. Carlyle as that wonderful woman who was able to live in the full light of Carlyle's genius and celebrity without being

overshadowed by it; who was in her own way as great as he, and yet who lived only to minister to him :

' Quiet and silent she assiduously renewed his cup of tea, and by an occasional word or judicious note struck just at the right moment kept him going, as if she wielded the mighty imagination at her pleasure, and evoked the thunder and the sunshine at her will. When she was alone, and herself the entertainer, one became aware of all the self-abnegation she practised, for she was herself a remarkably brilliant talker, and the store of quaint wit and wisdom which she poured forth, the marvellous memory which she displayed was to the minds of many quite as remarkable, and even more entertaining than the majestic utterances of her gifted husband. . . . It was said that those who came to sit at his feet remained at hers.'

Larkin remarked that ' both Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle had singularly expressive voices, like the many tones of a powerful organ and the perfect modulations of a mellow flute.'

Sir Charles Gavan Duffy on hearing of her death wrote :

' There was none of her sex outside my immediate kin whose loss would have touched me so nearly. I had known her for thirty years, always gracious and cheerful, even when physical pain or social trouble disturbed her tranquillity. She was perhaps easily troubled, for she was one of the sensitive natures who expect more of life than it commonly yields. I verily believe her married life was as serene, sympathetic and satisfying as those of ninety-nine out of a hundred of the exceptionally endowed classes that constitute Society. The greatly gifted are rarely content. They anticipate and desire something beyond their experience and find troubles where to robuster natures there would be none.'

Lord Guthrie, at the unveiling of the Carlyle Statue in the Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow, spoke thus :

' Tear away from the letters of both husband and wife the husks of sleeplessness, pain, drugs, and lifelong and acknowledged habits of exaggeration, and there would be found in them by any unprejudiced reader from beginning to end the kernel of as strong and pure conjugal affection as ever existed between a man and a woman.'

Mrs. Alex. Carlyle said to Moncure Conway, ' If uncle and aunt lived unhappily, I never discovered it; none of their relations knew it, and I am sure they did not know it themselves. Mr. Froude alone knows it.'

Every year while health permitted Carlyle made a pilgrimage to her grave. 'Ay, he comes here lonesome an' alone,' said the beadle to a visitor. 'His niece keeps him company to the gate, but he leaves her there, and she stays there for him. . . . Last time he stood here awhile in the grass, and then he kneeled down, and stayed on his knees at the grave, then he bent over, and I saw him kiss the ground.'

Yet in death they lie divided,—he at Ecclefechan, she at Haddington. Like bairns, each has returned to the more dearly loved parent—he to his mother; she to her father.

Carlyle ends his 'Reminiscences' thus:

'One is never long absent from me, . . . gone, gone, but very dear, very beautiful and dear! ETERNITY which cannot be far off is my strong city. . . . The universe is full of love and also of inexorable sternness and veracity: and it remains for ever true that "GOD reigns." Patience. Silence. Hope!'

That, to my mind, is the Carlyle of Whistler's fine picture, and this is his written testimony to his Jeannie's worth that all may read on her grave:

'IN HER BRIGHT EXISTENCE, SHE HAD MORE SORROWS THAN ARE COMMON, BUT ALSO A SOFT INVINCIBILITY, A CLEARNESS OF DISCERNMENT AND A NOBLE LOYALTY OF HEART WHICH ARE RARE. FOR FORTY YEARS SHE WAS THE TRUE AND EVER-LOVING HELPMATE OF HER HUSBAND, AND BY ACT AND DEED UNWEARIEDLY FORWARDED HIM AS NONE ELSE COULD IN ALL OF WORTHY THAT HE DID OR ATTEMPTED. SHE DIED AT LONDON ON 21ST APRIL, 1866, SUDDENLY SNATCHED AWAY FROM HIM AND THE LIGHT OF HIS LIFE AS IF GONE OUT.

That is the inscription that moved me as a girl, and to a woman of experience it is much more moving, for he meant it—every word.

In closing I would just say with Richard Garnett, 'If he could have died in her place, as he would have wished! No more sorrow then; no hopeless tears; no remorseful self-accusation, bitter as the reproach his failing faculties allowed him to cast on others, and hardly more just; chiefest of mercies, no literary executor! She would have guarded his fame; in another sense than that in which she had said it of Irving, 'the tongues' would never have been heard. Had Heaven indeed ordered aright? Peace, foolish Messieurs!'

ELIZABETH GARRETT BELL.

THE JACKALS.

BY EDWARD LIVEING.

I.

THERE is an oasis in the western desert of Egypt which has been discovered and lost again. At any rate, that is the case if my informant is to be believed and, though I have always been rather sceptical about the matter—so sceptical that I have never been out to try and re-discover it—a certain event, which happened not long after I had met him, often makes me wonder if his story was not at least founded on fact.

I met him at the house of the Omda of Derragnah, an old friend who had many a time put his finest guest room at my disposal during painting expeditions in Upper Egypt. He was one of the queerest fellows I have ever encountered, and I have come across a good number of them round about the Mediterranean. He was an Englishman, about thirty, but he wore the soft red, blue-tasselled *tarbush Arabi* of an Arab chief and a light blue Tunisian *burnous*. His face was long and remarkably white for a man living in that part of the world. He had an irritating habit of twitching his head back over his left shoulder. Another thing about him which annoyed me at first was the shiftiness and suspiciousness of his eyes, which never remained fixed for long on one object and were continually straying about, though keeping a vigilant watch on the movements of a stranger. But my first feelings of annoyance wore off as I realised that there was something on his mind, something frightening him.

The Omda was away in Cairo. After an enormous supper, anxiously supervised by his steward, we went out and sat down on the veranda. During the meal he had fired a lot of questions at me about England.

'You see,' he had remarked by way of apology, 'I've been out of the old country for ten years. I ran away from home after a row with my father, worked my passage out to Alexandria, and have kept myself going by all kinds of jobs ever since.'

My answers to his questions were short enough. I was tired after a camel journey of forty miles, and I saw that he was one of

those people who ask questions in order to keep you listening to what they themselves have to say. Gradually, too, I saw that he was talking to gain time, to hide something from me that was troubling him.

Well, we came out on to the veranda, and I threw myself into a wicker chair, in which I lay back, drawing deep, satisfying breaths of the spring night air, heavily scented with the odour of lemon flowers in the garden and the rich aromas which Egyptian soil exudes at the end of the day. I was looking contentedly through the trellis-work of a creeper growing about the top of the veranda into the deep blue of the sky lit by a full moon, when suddenly I heard my companion draw in his breath sharply. I scrutinised him out of the corner of my eye. He was silent and staring abstractedly ahead into the garden, except when he occasionally twitched his head back over his left shoulder.

What I remember chiefly about those moments was the tranquillity all around us, and the strange contrast this nervous man made with it. Now and then a cur barked in the village street, shouts and clashing of sticks subdued by distance came from a crowd of children playing at *cora* (a sort of hockey) by the light of the moon, and the thin, quavering notes of a *rubarba* were borne along in snatches on stray fragments of wind. But these sounds only added to the tranquillity, as though they toned into it and imparted to it a greater fullness. I was nearly on the point of sleep, when a fiendish chorus of wailing, starting with short barks and rising into a full simultaneous howl, made me sit straight upright in my chair.

'Never heard jackals make such a noise as that before,' I remarked.

'No, I don't suppose you have,' Sarfa replied.

I looked round at him and saw that he had drawn a small revolver from the folds of his *burnous*.

'They're about a hundred yards away at the back of the house,' he continued. 'Presently you'll see them pass along in front of the veranda. Once they start howling, I don't so much mind. One knows where they are then. I expect you've been looking at me and thinking I'm afraid of something. Well, I admit I am. I'm not a coward, mind you. I'm not afraid of dangers you can stand up to. But three months of invisible danger, of these brutes lurking for you in shadows and hidden places is more than flesh and blood can stand.'

He stopped talking suddenly, and then remarked in a lower voice :

‘ There they are ! ’

Seven shadowy forms, of larger build than the usual Egyptian jackal, with thick, almost bushy tails, filed through the lemon trees beneath us, casting their green eyes towards the veranda.

‘ You might almost think they were ghosts,’ muttered my companion, when they had disappeared through a gap in the mud wall bordering the garden. ‘ But they’re quite alive, I can assure you, and they’ll kill me in the long run.

II.

‘ Yes, you think I’m mad, don’t you ? ’ he went on. ‘ I’m not. Four months ago I cleared out into the desert with a man called Vilyard, a mining engineer, clever man, seen a lot of the East, but had a bee in his bonnet. He thought he might strike gold somewhere. He wanted someone to talk to whilst he hit rocks. So he took me with him.

‘ We wandered over sand and limestone for ten days with a cavalcade of eight camels, a Nubian servant as black as pitch, and two Egyptian camel *wallahs*. A march on the tenth day brought us unexpectedly to the edge of a wide, almost circular depression. We came upon it so unexpectedly that our camels nearly took us over the bordering limestone hills that fell almost sheer for thirty feet and afterwards shelved away into masses of pink shale. Across the basin itself, which must have been about seven miles wide, streams of ancient lava zigzagged, looking like so many asphalted roads, while away in the south-west corner I noticed a huge patch of sand with a glittering white surface.

“ Look at that corner over there ! ” I called to Vilyard, who was some distance away and was already looking through his glasses.

“ Salt ! ” he shouted back. “ Salt ! And where there’s salt there’s— Hallo ! ” he broke off. “ There are some palms, and I’m damned if there aren’t some houses just north of the salt.”

‘ By now I had trained my glasses in the same direction and, sure enough, my eyes came to rest upon some small white blobs looking like huge boulders that had been flung down to the level of a clump of palms.

“ Do you see the goats ? ” I shouted to Vilyard as I noticed a flock outside the huts.

" "Yes," he replied. "Obviously inhabitants there," and the next moment he had ordered one of the camel-drivers to unload a bottle of whisky, calling to me :

" "We'll split a bottle for good luck ! "

' So far Vilyard had been fairly sober since his departure from Cairo. But on more than one occasion I had felt uneasy as to whether this chap's elaborate arguments concerning the possibility of finding gold in the desert were not entirely delusions built up on whisky.

' There were two cases of whisky on that camel. It showed some signs of self-control on Vilyard's part that he had opened only three bottles since we had left Egypt. But, of course, undiluted whisky does not satisfy your thirst, not the terrible thirst that assails you in the desert if you have had to ration your water for several days. But, with the knowledge that we had, that water lay within an hour's march, we drained down that whisky as though it were pure water. Have you tried drinking alcohol to quench your thirst when there was nothing else available . . . you have ? Well, you know the feeling. For a moment your parched mouth and clogged throat find relief, then they begin to burn more terribly than ever. The violent heat rises within you, and the blood leaps to your head, setting up a drumming pulsation that is half pleasant and half painful. When we remounted, we had drunk half a bottle apiece, and that was quite enough even for a man like Vilyard, who must have been about as inured to whisky as any man could be, and it was certainly more than enough for myself.

' I do not remember much about the ride down into the oasis and across its surface. But, from what I do remember, I recollect it as the weirdest ride I ever took. Our camels plunged down the long slope. One moment I found myself gazing down at the flaming yellow sand, interspersed with coral-coloured patches of shale, as it flew past beneath me. The next moment I was sitting back, swaying on the saddle and wondering if that madly racing yellow beneath me would rise up and hit me in the face. And beyond me, well beyond, urging his camel on with a bamboo stick, which he invariably carried about with him, Vilyard dropping down into the oasis and sometimes turning round and beckoning us on with his bamboo.

' Once we gained the harder surface of the plain my mount, instead of slackening speed, seemed to put it on. His instincts told him that there were water, food, human habitations there.

I could not have stopped him even if I had tried, and I did not want to try. The flaming yellow beneath us became interspersed now with stretches of black lava, and each time these stretches whirled up to meet us I was thrown into the air an inch or so out of the saddle, and how I regained my balance I have not the slightest idea.

'Even at the rate we were going it must have taken us nearly an hour to get across the oasis, though, when we set out, the further side looking so near on account of the clarity of the atmosphere, we thought we should reach the village in a few minutes. It was getting on for noon when we drew within measurable distance of it.'

Sarfa broke off his narrative for a moment and drew his hand before his forehead. 'Do you know,' he continued, 'I can see that place now as vividly as I saw it then—the score or so of mud huts painted white and glistening like lumps of chalk, seven or eight huge palm-trees rising out of the centre as though they were growing out of a white yard, the limestone ridge standing up abruptly beyond, and over all a shimmering haze, the only thing which moved in the vast tranquillity of the desert, and which gave to these habitations, that displayed no visible sign of human life, the appearance of being a mirage.'

'As we came up to a huge wall of mud bricks which surrounded the village, our camels slowed down to an amble. I noticed Vilyard making for an opening in this wall, and a minute later he and his camel had disappeared through a large archway.'

'I followed, and as we emerged into the bright sunshine, we found ourselves riding up a little avenue of acacia-trees, at the end of which stretched a large pool of water, whose surface almost lay on a level with the flat blocks of white stone which had been let into the sand to surround it, and beyond which stood the large palm-trees which had been visible to us when we reached the edge of the oasis.'

III.

'Well,' he continued, 'it was about eleven in the morning when we came to rest in this spot. At first we were too tired to do more than lie down in the sand with our backs resting on the stone blocks surrounding the pool. Of course, you will say that it was foolhardy of us to have pushed ourselves into the centre

of this strange village in a strange oasis. Honestly, it was a mad thing to have done. But Vilyard had, I believe, absolutely no sense of personal danger. As to myself, well, I've been a jack of all trades, and I've always had to suit myself to the whims of those who employed me.

'As time wore on and we shook off some of our fatigue, we began to wonder whether the place was inhabited. Its mud walls were obviously very old indeed and most of the huts were in ruins. We looked carefully at the blocks of stone, and Vilyard pointed to one large block, saying :

"Aren't those hieroglyphics on that bit of stone ?"

"Look like it," I replied, but we were both too tired then to get up and investigate them.

"Shouldn't be surprised if the place was built by ancient Egyptians," Vilyard mused. "Left by them three thousand years or more ago, perhaps."

An end, however, was shortly put to our conjectures, for the wooden door of a hut near the archway was slowly opened and two figures emerged. They were tall figures, garbed in black tunics ; around their heads were wound cloths of a dark blue colour, drawn down over their faces in such a way that only the eyes and nose were visible.

"People of the Veil," muttered our camel *wallahs*.

"They're Tuaregs," I said to Vilyard.

"That's about it," he replied. "Probably a bit fanatical. How on earth they've got as far east as this I can't imagine. . . . Abdul," he asked, turning to our Nubian servant, "knowst thou anything of the languages of the People of the Veil ?"

Abdul knew a little of one of the dialects. He would talk to these people, should his master desire it. His master desired him to do so ? Very good.

Our movements in rising from the sand attracted the notice of the figures and they began to walk towards us, obviously surprised, but not apparently excited or hostile.

As they approached, we placed our right hands on our foreheads and mouths by way of salutation, to which they responded with similar gestures. The delicate formation of their hands and the reddish-yellow colour of their forearms, a colour somewhat similar to that of the skin of the average southern European, were very noticeable. The larger of the two figures took on the position of spokesman, and he was interpreted by Abdul, who after a few

sentences told Vilyard that he was not skilled in this particular language, but it bore sufficient likeness to the dialect he knew to allow him to interpret it fairly well.

‘After suitable exchange of compliments and inquiries after the health and well-being of one another, we got down to business. The village into which we had penetrated was extremely ancient and was now used at certain short periods of the year as the headquarters of a certain brotherhood of holy men, of *Tuareg origin, during their wanderings*. It was, in fact, a sort of monastery, and the two personages before us presided over the monastic order. *We should be allowed to view the field of salt and the jebel beyond*, and we were thanked in a dignified manner for our gifts of gold bangles. It was, however, impossible for them to extend hospitality to us for, happy as they would have been for us to drink milk with them and partake of their food, the brotherhood was not permitted to entertain any persons not of the true Faith.

‘Our conversations closed with formal expressions of good wishes on either side. We gathered our belongings together, filled our skins with water, and mounted our camels once more. As we passed through the large archway, we noticed several other members of the brotherhood who had emerged from their dwellings to see the white men and their cavalcade. Like the two holy men to whom we had spoken, they wore black tunics, but, unlike their superiors, their heads and faces were swathed in cloths of white.

IV.

‘It was not a long distance from the monastery to the glittering bed of salt lying under the frowning hills that closed in the west side of the oasis. Perhaps a ten minutes’ ride; certainly nothing more. By three o’clock in the afternoon we had pitched our little encampment on a strip of sand lying between the cliffs and the salt, and we were busy exploring the whole of this south-west corner. I know next to nothing about minerals and all that sort of thing, but I couldn’t help feeling that Vilyard’s enthusiasm about our find was either assumed or else merely the result of the imaginings of a clever brain disordered by years of alcoholic existence under hot skies.

‘We started our investigations by trudging across the salt bed. The snow-like surface, silvered over with small crystals,

was crisp, but offered only slight resistance to our feet, which sunk through to the sand beneath. To my mind this bed, a very shallow one, was simply the outcome of an accumulation of water at some time or other. Vilyard, armed with a small pick-axe, bored savage holes in several places into the unoffending white substance. On most occasions he only reached sand, but twice he went down far without encountering any sand, and the salt became much harder.

'Encouraged by this success, we trudged back to look at the cliffs, Vilyard remarking :

"If we don't find anything at all up there, I shall be satisfied"; and, spreading out his free hand suggestively across the salty surface, "This alone should be quite a commercial proposition."

"Weird chap," I thought to myself as I watched the back of his tall, lanky figure, pick-axe thrown over one shoulder, striding across the salt. "Terrific nervous energy. Bound to break up if he takes life at this pace much longer."

'Personally, I felt more like lying down and having a good sleep than swarming up those cliffs and knocking bits out of them with a hammer. And what came of our investigations? Nothing. We climbed and scrambled about their precipitous face for hours, Vilyard hammering away at veins of quartz and layers of pink and reddish sandstone which crumbled to pieces and revealed no glittering substance beneath. At last we gave up any further attempts.

"A little iron about; nothing more," declared Vilyard. "Let's go and have something to eat."

'At the evening meal, served by the massive Abdul, we discussed the events of the day. Abdul was very emphatic in his assurances that the holy men of the monastery harboured no kind feelings towards his masters. Vilyard laughed at him and took his protestations as a great joke, at the same time pouring out, I noticed, a good deal of whisky into his mug.

"They would not give you of their milk or bread," Abdul repeated. "They extended no hospitality towards you. Therefore you are not their guests, they are not your hosts."

"And then?" asked Vilyard.

"Then, genabou, they are under no obligation to protect you."

"You mean they are under no obligation not to attack us, the rascals?"

"Assuredly, genabou, they belong to the People of the Veil,

and moreover to a special brotherhood. These men, very fanatical."

"We have our weapons," Abdul added.

"And there is, moreover, your mighty gun," laughed Vilyard, referring to Abdul's remarkable blunderbuss, a very ancient fire-piece which was always the butt of our little expedition's jests.

A huge grin spread over Abdul's face and the subject of our fanatical neighbours was dropped.

That evening Vilyard and I sat on the summit of the cliffs talking of the commercial prospect of our bed of salt. The poor chap expounded all sorts of impossible schemes for transporting the salt to Upper Egypt and marketing it there. He even went so far as to suggest the feasibility of a light railway across the desert.

As we talked, the sun fell to the rim of the misty horizon and its red glare was reflected in the oasis at our feet, suffusing the far edge of the salt bed with a delicate pink, staining the eastern hills to a deep brown colour, and casting a film of varied colours over the palms, the white huts of the monastery, and the whole vast bowl of sand veined with its ancient lava streams. A moonlit night succeeded, a bluish sky and a host of stars filling the vast bowl with silver light.

V.

What woke me up I cannot say. Through the open door of our bell tent came the faint glimmer of the north African night in the early morning hours, when the moon is setting and the dawn has not yet appeared. The first thing I noticed was that the figure of Abdul, who had taken up his situation outside the entrance when we retired for the night, had vanished. I turned my eyes in the direction of Vilyard's camp-bed on the other side of the supporting pole of the tent. His sleeping-bag was empty and the blankets had been thrown to the bottom of the bed. "What on earth is the man doing?" I said to myself. I got up, put on a pair of slippers, and threw an overcoat over my shoulders. As I was taking this overcoat down from a nail in the tent pole I stumbled over a half-emptied bottle of whisky. So that was what he had been up to!

The strip of sand on which our small encampment was situated sloped gradually down to the salt bed, so that I could easily look right across the wide expanse rendered mistlike and ghostly

in the half light. Almost at once I detected the two figures of Vilyard and Abdul. What they were doing there I couldn't imagine, but surmised that this extraordinary man was so enthused over his find that he could not leave it even at night. And as to Abdul, well, he was following his master about like a faithful dog. All at once the two walking figures came to a halt and I could see Vilyard's free hand (the other was grasping the end of his pick-axe) raised in motion to signify absolute silence. Almost at the same time a number of shadowy forms appeared on the far edge of the salt bed and began to advance in single file across it. I had never seen jackals behaving in such a disciplined and formidable manner. At first they seemed only to be ambling across, but as they approached the two human figures they appeared to break into a trot. I was now pretty certain that they were going to attack Vilyard and Abdul. For, headed by a huge brute, who seemed to be the leader of the pack, they were making a direct line towards them. I ran back into the tent and fetched my revolver.

'As I started down the sandy incline towards the salt bed, I saw the pack consolidate itself into a group and I heard it give vent to a savage yowling. Abdul had left his blunderbuss behind and Vilyard obviously had not got his revolver with him; otherwise he would have used it by now. I could not shoot at those demoniacal brutes without danger of hitting the two men, so that, as I ran along, I fired my revolver into the ground in the hope that the noise of the shots would frighten the animals. Fortunately they had this effect, the whole group scattering, except for the leader and a somewhat smaller animal. It was this smaller animal which approached nearest to Vilyard, and, as it did so, I saw that tall figure hurl his pick-axe with terrific force at it. The impact of the blow rolled it over and over till it fell in a motionless heap. Before any of us had time to do anything, the retreating animals swept back in a body and, snatching up their fallen comrade, made off across the white salt into the vast shadow of the oasis.

'Abdul was thrown into a terrified state by this event. As he stood by our camp table during our breakfast he implored us to follow up the tracks of those jackals. One of them had been killed. It was a serious matter. These jackals were no ordinary jackals.

"And what kind of jackals are they, then?" questioned Vilyard jocularly.

"Have you not heard, genabou, that holy men take the shape of these animals on nights when the moon rides in the sky?"

"Do you think your master has killed a holy man, Abdul?"

"It may be so. But we must find out."

'There are some men who seem to have no sense of physical danger, but who are, nevertheless, exceedingly superstitious when brought face to face with matters possessing an apparent supernatural element. I verily believe that Vilyard was such a man. Abdul's suggestion must have come as a shock to him. He became unusually silent, and I had no difficulty in persuading him to get back to his bed and have some sleep, while Abdul and I went off to investigate the lair of the jackals.

'As there was no knowing whether the pack might not have come from the other side of the oasis, our faithful henchman and myself mounted two of our camels. We trotted down to the scene of the engagement that had taken place two hours earlier. We experienced no difficulty in detecting evidences of the affray—a confusion of paw marks and several large red stains on the white surface. These stains and marks led away north-eastwards and we immediately followed them up, speeding our camels to a quick trot. For some reason it seemed inevitable to me that they would lead us to only one spot and, as we reached the palm-trees and the walled monastery lying underneath them, I began, much against my will and intelligence, to believe in Abdul's suggestions, which I had hitherto regarded in my mind as the senseless superstitions of a Nubian.

'We rounded the outskirts of the monastery and pulled up before the high archway. The trail of blood and paw marks ran between the walls, and forcing my camel a few paces through the archway, I looked cautiously into the light beyond.

'The trail of blood led to the door which Vilyard and I had watched open slowly the day before. . . .

VI.

'All day our cavalcade had ridden across the desert, and part of the night too, though our mounts were becoming spent. About midnight we could urge them no further, and decided to rest in a small *wadi*.

'From the moment that Abdul and I had informed Vilyard of the results of our investigations, he had decided to return to

civilisation as quickly as possible. All day as he rode he looked like a haunted man. He was obsessed by the belief that we were being pursued, and was remarkably nervous during the few rests which we had taken, continually saying :

"I swear I'm being watched, Sarfa. I haven't a shadow of doubt about it."

'Then he would look round the vast horizon, taking careful stock of the *tells* and boulders strewn over the yellow waste across which you could see the waves of heat dancing up and down, but no other movement or sign of life.

'I admit that by the time we came to rest in this little *wadi*, into which the sky, luminous with the moon and hosts of stars, looked down so tranquilly, my nerves were almost as jaded as Vilyard's. We got out our last but one bottle of whisky and restored to ourselves some warmth and courage with part of its contents.

'It was, perhaps, an hour later, when I was lying on my back looking up into the sky and watching sleepily some small white clouds drifting across it that I heard a distant wailing borne up from the west by a snatch of wind. I said to myself, "Keep a hold on your nerves, you fool," but for all that I sat up very quickly. I should think I listened for five minutes. Nothing. Not a sound of any sort. Then just as I was going to lie back once more, the wailing reached my ears again with redoubled clamour.

'Abdul, too, had heard the sound, and we both shook Vilyard at the same moment. In another minute we were all on our feet, Vilyard and I grasping our revolvers and Abdul unslinging his blunderbuss. The camel *wallahs*, muttering under their voices prayers to Allah, hastened to load our steeds, but Vilyard stopped them and told them to arm themselves with their whips.

"You will not die," he said as they hesitated. "It is I whose blood they wish to drink."

'The change that had come over Vilyard was astounding. As the shrieking came nearer and nearer, so he seemed to gather together his courage in the face of danger which was now definite. I can see him as vividly at this moment as I saw him then, his face in the moonlight expectant, white, and strained, but grim and determined, and his ungainly torso stooping slightly forward so as to catch a sight of our pursuers as soon as they came into view.

'That we were being pursued we none of us had any doubt

now. Vilyard was right in deciding not to take to the camels. The animals would have been mobbed and we should have been unsaddled and should have fallen into the jackal pack without having the chance of firing at them, as we had now while they advanced towards us.

'Suddenly there reached my ears a piercing yell, followed by a full-tongued chorus, and a second later a band of shadowy objects sped into view at the western end of the *wadi*. Standing my ground, I felt the chill of terror steal through my body. In an effort to shake off this cold feeling I must have moved one of my feet, for it knocked down the bottle of whisky. This I picked up in my left hand to use as an additional weapon if necessary.

'Up came the pack in a bunch. A crash of sound broke from Abdul's blunderbuss. The discharge did not appear to touch our assailants, still less to scare them.

'They were within thirty yards of us now and I had already fired my revolver three times when the leader of the pack bounded forward, making for Vilyard. Before I realised what had happened, Vilyard had run out to meet the brute, shouting to us to "Stay where you are."

'Twice I heard his revolver click, and the horrible fact dawned on me that it was not working. The man and the beast were now too near together for me to fire; they closed as I ran forward, the unusually large jackal leaping at Vilyard's throat. Over they rolled on the ground, and coming up to them I brought the whisky bottle down over the brute's right eye with all the force of my left hand. It let go of my poor comrade's neck, yelped terribly and leapt away with desperate agility.

'Abdul was now firing his blunderbuss excitedly, and I stooped down over poor Vilyard. That brute had made a deadly gash in his throat, from which the blood was streaming.

' "No salt . . ." he whispered in his old jocular manner, but never said another word.

'I let his poor head lie back on the sand and, rising quickly to my feet, looked to see what had happened.

'The leader wounded, the pack was rapidly retiring to the end of the *wadi*. The shrieking died down, and the still more terrible silence of the desert night descended upon us and the dead body of my companion.

VII.

'Dawn was now approaching. The sandstone cliffs, hemming in both sides of the *wadi*, were becoming perceptibly brighter and streaks of gold and red had appeared in the quiet sky. We dug a pit in some soft sand and placed Vilyard's body in it, keeping our eyes keen all the time against a possible further attack. Then we shovelled the sand over that poor body gone on its final adventure, the camel *wallahs* and Abdul calling on Allah, and myself attempting to repeat some half-remembered prayers out of the Burial Service.

'I could now begin to trace with my eyes the paw marks and blood left behind by our assailants. I followed them up and, as I walked along, I noticed a figure lying motionless at the western side of the *wadi*. You can understand perhaps something of my feelings when I saw that figure? I've told you already that I'm not a coward—at least not more of a coward than the average human being. But there are some things that overpower anybody. I had no intention of investigating that figure by myself, and I called to Abdul to follow me, pointing ahead with my finger.

'The track of blood and paw marks led us in a zigzag way to the figure, which, before I had got right up to it, I identified as the spokesman of the two Tuaregs whom we had encountered in the monastery. His blue cloth had fallen off his face, which against the yellow sand was the colour of light blue parchment, and a streak of blood ran across it from a gash in the eye.

'The man was dead, and as I watched him for the space of a few seconds the horrible fact came home to me that I was destined to share Vilyard's fate unless I reached civilisation before night-fall. Abdul had also appreciated the situation and he pointed to me, after touching his throat suggestively with his finger.

"Allah, the good, the wise, the merciful, save us!" he exclaimed. "Let us ride quickly away, *genabou*, before they kill you also."

'Was it imagination, or not, that made me feel that we were being watched? You know the feeling when someone is looking at you intently? It compels you to turn and discover who the looker is. That was the feeling that I had, but it was a multiplied one, for I wanted to turn in several directions at once. Yet, when I had looked all round the *wadi*, I had discovered no signs of life, not a movement, except for the camel *wallahs* and the camels. Nothing stirred on the crest of the sand hills now surmounted by blue sky.

"Come," I said to Abdul, "we will ride away at once. Tell the *wallahs* to hasten and make all things ready."

Ten minutes later our little cavalcade ambled out of that depressing *wadi* into an open stretch of desert. Here we broke into a trot, led by myself steering almost due east by a compass. We maintained this trot across comparatively level and hard sand for two hours. I estimated that we had about forty miles in front of us, though for all I knew it might have been eighty. At the end of an hour we reached the edge of a region broken up into innumerable small *tells* and *wadis*, and I called a halt for a few minutes.

If we had had any pursuers, we had certainly shaken them off by now, and I drew a deep sigh of relief when I had made a complete survey of the horizon behind us through field-glasses and had not found a vestige of life. Looking ahead, however, I could see no landmark that signified our proximity to the Nile valley. Another night in the desert was a terrible prospect, and we were soon on our way again, trotting downwards into the broken-up region at our feet.

We took five hours to cross that ten mile or so stretch of desert, losing ourselves repeatedly in intersecting *wadis* and the camels being put to a terrible test as they climbed over obstructing *tells*. In fact, before we got clear of it, we had to give our wretched mounts a long rest. During part of that rest I spent some of the most uncomfortable moments of my life. It must have been about two or three o'clock in the afternoon. Even a January sun is unpleasantly hot in the desert at that time of the day, and we had had it flaming down upon us for hours. We drank half the remainder of our scanty water supply, and I confess I drank a quarter of a bottle of whisky, the last one left. The only food that we had was some dates which I divided into four equal portions, keeping a few in my saddle-bag. After this small meal we went to sleep, except for Abdul, who kept guard.

From that siesta I awoke with a start to feel Abdul's hand shaking my arm. The huge Nubian's dark face had turned pale with fear. I mean I could actually see the pallor underneath its dark surface.

"We are being watched, *genabou*," he was exclaiming excitedly.

"Impossible!" I drawled lazily, finding it difficult to adjust my eyesight to the glare of the sun and my thoughts to our unpleasant predicament. But the next moment I was sitting up and looking around intently. Abdul and I were ensconced in a

kind of hollow shelf under the topmost ledge of a small *tell* of pink and yellow sandstone. At the foot of the *tell* lay our camels and the two *wallahs* in a layer of soft sand. From this shelf it was possible to gaze southwards, westwards, and eastwards across to the long ridge of sandstone hills opposite. The slope of these hills was strewn with large boulders and was partially in shade, owing to projecting shelves of sandstone lining the summit.

'It was in the direction of some of these huge boulders that Abdul pointed. I followed his hand with my eyes and at first could see no movements whatever. There seemed to be no life except ourselves in that huge stillness and emptiness, and the only sound that I could hear was the thump, thump, thump of my own heart. It must have been quite a minute before I detected a movement. Then I became aware of a head covered with a white cloth peering round the corner of one of those boulders; it disappeared, but shortly afterwards another head crept round the side of a neighbouring boulder.

'For some time I watched our watchers. Then I couldn't stand the suspense any longer.

'I called to our camel *wallahs* to make ready and, as they urged their beasts to their feet, I whispered to Abdul to "Shoot."

'He unslung his blunderbuss and rammed bits of lead and stone down its wide, circular mouth. Meanwhile I fished my revolver, already loaded, out of its holster.

'Our joint fusillade reverberated loudly in that still place. I wasted ten cartridges and Abdul most of his miscellaneous ammunition before we ceased firing. I say "wasted" because I wasn't sure whether the objects of our fire were mere phantoms of our imagination or not, and though these objects may have crouched for safety behind the rocks, I should have thought it more likely that they would have replied to our fire, if they had been there at all. I had expected them to fire back; indeed, I would have welcomed this. There comes a point at which, as no doubt you know, the instinct of fear seems to lose its original purpose of self-protection, and urges one to actions the very reverse of those it was intended to urge one to. That was, I admit, the state of fear or suspense which I had been reduced to—a sorry enough state of things. But I also thought then, and I think so still, that the reason why they made no retaliation was that they were not out to do so by day. In other words—and this was a *stunning, horrible thought for a man tired both physically and mentally*—they would not kill me as men in daylight, but

were under some particular vow or spell to kill me as brutes in the night time. This interpretation would explain the following up during the day before and killing of poor Vilyard the night before, wouldn't it? Ah! you may try and laugh it off, but I'm pretty certain about it.

'I can see you're getting tired, so I'll cut short the last bit of our adventures that day. I never attempted to investigate those boulders on the other side of the *wadi*; instead we made for our camels and were out of it in a very short space of time—out and beyond into the flat open desert once more. About four o'clock we passed on our right some hills, to the south of which we had passed on our way into the desert. I knew then that I was safe, and well before nightfall we had reached the cliffs bordering the western edge of the Nile valley. An hour later I was sitting in this house over a huge repast, feeling that my troubles were all finished.

'But, of course, they weren't. That very first night they began all over again. Abdul and I were woken up by the brutes wailing outside my bedroom, and this business has gone on ever since. If I give 'em a single chance they'll take it.'

VIII.

I am not an easily credulous person and I had found Sarfa's narrative more and more incredible as it had proceeded. He would not have been the first man I had met who had transferred his bad qualities to someone else in recounting past experiences. It was quite possible, I said to myself, that he had himself been out on some expedition in the desert and, to counteract the loneliness, had allowed whisky to tipple him into all these weird imaginings. And yet . . . well, anyhow, he was a fellow countryman and I wanted to help him.

'Why shouldn't we organise a shoot and do all the blighters in?' I proposed.

'What's the use?' he answered. 'Can't you see, it's an organisation—a huge organisation or fellowship existing in many parts of Africa, probably. Kill one of the members, and they'll hunt you to the ends of the earth.'

'Why don't you get away from this place and come to Cairo with me to-morrow?' I asked.

'What's the good of it?' he replied. 'It's Fate. They're bound to get me in the long run. They won't let me leave Egypt,

that's certain. And I may just as well face them here as anywhere else. . . . Dash it all,' he continued, bringing his hand down on the arm of his wicker chair, as though to assure himself of the fact, 'I'm not a coward!'

For half an hour or more I argued with him, tried to put the common-sense point of view to him. At last the chilliness of the spring night set an end to our wrangling.

The orange-like appearance of the moon had long since turned into a cold yellow-grey disc, and a wind from the desert shivered in the *sont* trees and played spasmodically in neighbouring palm tops like a slow up-beating tide on a sandy shore.

'Let's go in,' he suggested.

As we left the veranda a gust of wind brought to our ears the 'Yop, yop, yop' of jackals, bursting into a full howl of intense eeriness.

'You see, there's no common sense in a land like this,' he said a minute later, as he handed me a glass of whisky with a hand that trembled visibly.

We parted the next day, for I wanted to return to Cairo. He walked through the village with me down to the ferry over the Ibrahimiyeh canal. As the ferry carried me across the placid water, I watched his tall, loose figure disappear through crowds of natives on the banks.

During the subsequent three weeks that I spent in Egypt his figure often came before my eyes, the figure of a man walking in a nightmare, but I was so hard driven with various activities during the last week of my stay that he must have passed momentarily out of my thoughts. I therefore received a considerable shock on picking up a copy of the *Egyptian Gazette* on board my outward-going boat in Alexandria docks and reading the following paragraph:

'We regret to announce the death of Mr. Alfred Spurr under strange circumstances on the night of May 20th. For several years past Mr. Spurr had acted as the estate agent to various well-known Egyptian land-owners. Mr. Spurr was known among the natives as the Sheikh Sarfa. His body was found lying on the floor of a room in the house of the Omda of Derragnah, with whom he had been staying for some time past, in Asyut Province.

'The inquest has not yet taken place, but news that has reached us gives us to understand that death was due to the deceased's windpipe having been bitten right through by the bite of a dog or some kindred animal.'

CRICKET.

I.

Two very eminent men, Lord Bryce and the late Lord Goschen, have pronounced two very different verdicts on the practice of writing about athletics. The former said he could imagine nothing duller than the reports of games. The latter once made a speech in which he avowed that he read the reports of the principal cricket matches eagerly and readily, and offered to back himself against any rival in knowledge of contemporary cricket events.

But reminiscences about cricket fifty years ago, besides being extremely common, seem to me, I confess, to be pointless unless they help to correct misconceptions or to suggest certain cautions in the way the game is being managed to-day. There is a further topic of interest: viz. the place of cricket in school life. Of these three subjects the second is the most important, and, indeed, all that I have to say will more or less directly bear on the questions—What is the matter with cricket to-day? and Among the many proposals for reform, is there one which commends itself as touching the heart of the mischief and at the same time as practicable?

In order to make clear how, and in what respects, the game has deteriorated, I will recall what it was at its best in the 'sixties and 'seventies. Long scores were rare, especially at Lord's: at the Oval they were commoner, because the turf was smoother. In the early 'seventies Lord's began to be made easier for the batsman; but 1875 was, as far as I can remember, the last year in which the dreaded Lord's shooter occurred, except very occasionally; and since then the scores have increased enormously and the game has become dull. Etonians whose brothers' memories went back to 1860 had reason to dread the Lord's shooter, as it was connected with one of the finest amateur bowlers that ever lived, Bob Lang of Harrow. About 1892, never having seen this celebrity, but holding his name from childhood in the utmost reverence (for he used to find his way to my eldest brother's wicket), I was startled to be given a card with Rev. R. Lang announced as a visitor to Haileybury. Out into the garden came an unmistakable elderly cricketer, and right glad I was to make his acquaintance. He told

me the last ball he bowled was in Gents *v.* Players in 1862, for directly afterwards he took a curacy in Yorkshire and found, on arrival, his table littered with letters asking him to bowl here, there, and everywhere. He decided that it was a choice between clerical work and cricket, and he never touched a ball again. All honour to his name! But fancy, if he had kept Saturday afternoons only for matches, the appalling havoc he would have made on the country grounds!

It was said that the accomplished artist and beautiful fieldsman, Herbert Marshall (Cambridge XI and Free Foresters), was the only man who could stand long-stop to Lang. He used to stand about ten yards behind the wicket-keep, hoping for the finish of the first bound. But what must the dead shooters have been, with their peculiar habit of leaping up to the face, without notice, from hissing along the thin grass?

Now it used to be said that Lord's was 'improved,' not only by being levelled,—it sloped heavily from the Grand Stand to the entrance—but by a new seed being used for sowing on the bare patches, the result of which was a thin but uniform growth of grass which would stand being mowed down very fine, but which, of course, would then, after rolling, make a surface more and more like a billiard table.

'Yes,' says the connoisseur, 'and all the better. You don't mean to say you hanker after the old dangerous pitches with all this modern over-hand bowling? Are you prepared to pay for a cemetery outside Lord's—mortuary chapel, ambulance, and all?'

No, my good sir, nothing of the sort. Do listen before you gibe: an unfashionable way of passing the time, but worth while. The billiard-table wicket injures the game in its very vitals.

(a) It makes things easy for the batsman, difficult for the bowler. Many a shoddy batsman has made a century in his time, not having had through the whole innings a difficult ball to play. Meantime, bowlers not blessed with a swerve are of no use to their side unless they have boundless endurance. When no one can bowl a hard ball, the best bowler is the one who can go on longest. Bowling is a species of treadmill, and I can hardly believe that young amateurs will continue to practise it. A Public School is not a prison or anything like one, and none of their training will fit the requirements of a treadmill, trodden only by the outsiders who have to make a livelihood. You might as well think to improve tennis by arranging that one side of the net should be rough and

the other smooth; each player to keep to his own side! But that is only the ante-chamber to the mischief. In 1872 I remember bowling fast round-hand on an Upper Club pitch at Eton, R. A. H. Mitchell, in his prime, batting at one end and one of the boys at the other. About once an over a well-pitched ball would shoot dead. Mike's (R. A. H. Mitchell) play of the shooters was superb; but I could calculate on most of the rest falling before one. The late Lord Clifton remarked that bowling at Mike on a smooth wicket was his idea of Inferno.

(b) We remember, as the wickets all over the country became smoother, over-hand bowling came in, men discerning that the only chance of keeping down the runs was to make the ball bound high. Result: if by chance there was a rough spot overlooked, death loomed close at hand. About 1880 a 'perfect'-looking wicket had, as usual, been prepared at Canterbury; but when Foord-Kelsey came to bowl, about once in three overs, for *no apparent reason*, the ball kicked awfully. 'Monkey' Hornby declared one bumper went out of reach of wicket-keep and long-stop, and only touched the ground once before the boundary. Many will remember A. H. Evans kicking in the 'Varsity Match of 1880; but only one or two were privileged to hear his remonstrance next day with the reporter—a diminutive man—who asserted that he threw.

(c) The bowlers next discovered that they must keep the ball on the off-side entirely, so as to stop leg-hitting; and conglomerate the field on the off, with three short slips, etc. Result—horrible monotony; many balls being left alone by the batsman and total disappearance of the grandest features of the game—to wit, long-leg hitting, long-leg fielding, and the long-on drive with the bat vertical.

(d) Not only would balls never shoot, but they ceased to turn, only a genius now and then being able to effect a break-back from the off; and no one dreaming of a curl from leg, such as that of 'Granny' Martingell, for fear of being hit to the outside. Mike taught some of us to play shooters. It was galling after '75 to see batsmen with inferior defence piling up a long score after you had been perhaps yorked out for 0 or given out unfairly by the country umpire.

The darkest side of long scoring is very dark indeed.

Now and again a 'googly' appeared who varied the proceedings, but for most bowlers to learn the trick meant hideous labour and (some asserted) a hand damaged for life.

The result of all this is that the game has become dull to watch and far less interesting and wholesome to play. The last match I saw at Lord's gave me a heartache. The bowler took a run of 25 yards, and of course had to save his breath by walking slowly to his starting point. He pounded down a whole over of identical balls just outside the off stump, and the batsman did not attempt to touch one. Can one be expected to pay money and spend time for the purpose of contemplating such tomfoolery? Let it be noted that this dismal deterioration of a most noble game is caused solely by the smooth wickets. Only in certain states of the weather, or occasionally in school matches where the youthful captain may upset calculations by wild tactics, can anything dramatic occur. Man has done his best to spoil the fun, and the game is now living on its past. Certain it is that it never would have been invented if in its earlier stages it had been like what it is on all 'perfect' wickets to-day. But what is to be done?

There is only one thing to be done. The pitches should be so treated that, though they would be level, and never dangerous, the grass would restore shooters and—quite as important—give a good chance to an average bowler to make the ball turn. That could be done by careful experiments on different soils. The result aimed at would simply be wickets always a bit difficult, never dangerous. Some of the many experts in grass surfaces who know how to treat the different greens on a golf course would be able to advise, and if part of the practice ground at Lord's were devoted to the experiments, in two years' time we should be within sight of the goal.

I am afraid this is one of those suggestions which are too sensible to be carried out. Whatever the difficulties or the uncertainty may be, there is not a rag of reason against its being tried. But there are two obstacles—one obvious, the other less so—in the way.

(a) Cash. The effect would be shorter matches. The clubs demand three full days' gate-money; and if the game is over in a day and a half—as ours was when the Cambridge XI whacked the first Australian team in 1878—nobody is pleased, and the treasurer of the club threatens to resign.

I admit that this objection is formidable, but only because we are singularly foolish. The clubs exist for the game, and not the game for the clubs; and I maintain the present bloated system of financing county clubs is an artificial and costly sham, destructive of true sport. Some counties are worse than others;

at least it was well known that, not many years ago, good young players were bribed from County A to County B in order that County B could remain in the list of the first-class counties. But where is the satisfaction of using imported professionals? The whole thing is a sorry make-believe, and the wonder is that otiose spectators are still so numerous, when we were told five years ago that all depended on every man in the country working his hardest!

(b) The other difficulty is similar, but less recognised. It was told me first by R. A. H. Mitchell some years ago. It is that the conduct of affairs in the M.C.C. is largely in the hands of the county captains. Now these are generally elderly amateur batsmen, who have only a few years more play left, and are quite clear in their minds that, come what may, the pitches are not going to be made more difficult—in their time anyhow. ‘Après nous le déluge,’ they whisper softly to each other in the Lord’s pavilion, and so they remain obstructives till they retire, and then perhaps become reformers in their old age, but perhaps not.

As to cricket in the schools, discrimination is necessary. You want a smooth wicket for the practice nets, as easy as you can make it, in order to teach a boy to stand firm and learn his strokes, neither of which he can do if he fears a blow in the ribs. But the pitch for school matches should be of the sort I advocate, giving plenty of hope to the bowler, and so guarding against long, wearisome scores being made by visitors, the bowlers being discouraged, and the fieldsmen bored.

Every care should be taken to prevent the game becoming selfish. In the schools too much is made of batting feats, much too little of fielding. Many a boy I have known, who might have made himself a fair bowler, gives himself up to batting for the pleasure and glory of it, rather than work steadily at acquiring precision of pitch. It is startling to notice how deadly in attack is simple precision of pitch. Some will remember W. M. Rose, the lob-bowler. He had no great natural gift of spin, and on a hard wicket never even attempted the twist, but relied wholly on length and change of pace. Both, I was told, he acquired by solid grind as an Eton boy. He would pound away by the hour together in ‘Sixpenny’ bowling at a stump with a friend to return the balls. *Sic itur ad astra.*

The most accurate bowler ever known as a boy was F. M. Buckland, and, though a grand batsman as well, he used to say

that he enjoyed bowling more. Every ball he bowled had a meaning and a purpose, for 'Peeler,' as we called him, had a brain. His demeanour was curiously shrinking and timid, and in 1872 he walked in at Lord's to face Shand, a formidable left-hand Harrow bowler (pavilion end), carrying his bat as if he were afraid of it. But lo ! from the very first ball he made one of the most gorgeous leg-hits ever seen. The ball disappeared into the grey mist and continued rising till it crashed into the window close by the clock in the old tennis court, near where the Mound now is. 'Peeler' smiled an embarrassed smile as if he had done something wrong.¹

In batting it was the great quartette of Uppingham contemporaries, A. P. Lucas and Patterson, D. Q. Steel and one other, who made the reputation of H. H. Stephenson as a coach. But no good batsman really owes very much to coaching. You may show him how to stand firm and move his arms gracefully ; but suppose he puts the bat in the wrong place when a straight ball is on its way. What then ? H. H., as we used to call him, exercised extraordinary power at Uppingham in E. Thring's time. In 1896 it continued unabated under Thring's successor, Selwyn. 'Well, between you and I,' he said in answer to a question as to the age of a very powerful eleven of boys, 'I tell you what I does. If one of these 'ere parents wants to take one of these boys away, I just writes him a letter, and so I keeps them. But not always : there's young —— ; he's only eighteen and might stay another year ; but you see he's been getting just a bit too big for his boots, so I shall let him go.' This remarkable saying of an uneducated cricket professional is vouched for, and it sheds a singular light on the history of Public School education in England. The truth is the influence of such a man among boys who are nominally being taught the love of literature is an anachronism. The supervision of games is entrusted to a master, and in 1895 (?) at Haileybury the salary of P. H. Latham, the captain of the Cambridge XI, was provided from the sale of bats, balls, shoes, pads, etc.—merged,

¹ In 1877 he won the match for Oxford v. Cambridge with a magnificent century ; and of his innings for Gentlemen v. Players at Princes—67, I think it was—W. G. said he had never in his life seen a player so consistently hit the ball with the very middle of his bat.

As a parallel to that leg-hit, F. W. Marchant, when at Eton, hit the first ball of his innings to leg for a clean six, though there was a competent long-leg standing out deep. This was in Upper Club in a school match in the 'eighties. The mere sight of such triumphs lengthens one's life—how much more to achieve them !

And leg-hitting is all but dead ! but it may be revived.

of course, into the school fund—which had previously been a source of large emolument to his predecessor, a sort of Autolycus racquet pro. Latham was one of the very best housemasters I have known, and his successor, C. J. Reid, was growing into similar excellence when he was killed in the war. Of both men, one can say *Quis desiderio . . . ?*

As to fielding, the Winchester boys have long established a fine tradition. Eton has never taught it so persistently, and generally the team was uncertain and undisciplined in this noble art. There are three technical devices for teaching fielding well worth careful experiment.

(1) In practice, provide no net behind the wicket, but make your promising batsman who is clumsy with his hands long-stop *pro tem*. He requires steady drill for half an hour a day, and will soon enjoy it as he finds the ball lodging more and more frequently in his hands.

(2) Near him should stand the man selected for short slip, who needs familiarising with that most attractive place: also—though only for a short time—the wicket-keeper should be given his daily practice, not bruising his hands nor tiring his back, but to grow thoroughly accustomed to the problems.

(3) Every member of the team should have at least ten minutes a day of practice with a colleague, one throwing the ball to the other along the ground or boundary, each ducking, stooping, jumping this way and that, and learning how supple human limbs are intended to be. Very few people, cricketers or not, know how greatly freedom of movement may be developed, and it is a sheer gain to secure scientific gymnastics in games, rather than in a gymnasium, though the latter is far better than nothing.

School cricket, in short, should be made a training in corporate effort, just as free from personal display as football or rowing. Moreover, like those two sports, it needs to be concentrated. Every effort should be made to save the long dawdling spells of time when one player, 'yorked out' for 0, perhaps has to hang about watching another making a century. In modern life time must be saved; and cricket has always been open to the objection that when things go wrong you may miss your bodily exercise. To be given out wrongly by a country umpire and then have to make pleasant small talk with ladies, who only know that you have got a 'blob,' is more than ought to be demanded of anyone on his holiday. Meantime

your mates are having a fine time of it, compiling 400 runs as they like. Your share in these proceedings is not recreation, but bitterness in the inner man.

Again I say the remedy is to provide wickets which help the bowler and prevent inordinate scoring. The result would be a true renovation of the game, a recovery of that which gave it its immense charm in the past. Some of us remember village cricket at its best, when the squire's sons, the local curate, the village lob-bowler, the footman and the gardener's boy went to make up a delightfully motley team, ardent with parochial patriotism, and keenly co-operative and democratic. The wicket was always a little difficult, and now and again it must be admitted there was danger to life or limb: the ball would hum just past the tip of the nose, reminding the batsman of large possibilities. Anyhow, the ordinary length of a side's innings was about 60 runs, and when one of us was dismissed for 10 or 20—quite a good contribution—there would be just time for some expression of feeling, and then came the fielding. Four innings in one day; something happening every five minutes! That is cricket as our forbears evolved the game; a game, I repeat, and deserving of the title: not a bondage nor an infatuation, nor a waste of time, but a noble recreation steeped in some of the healthiest of our English traditions. For those who require a still more personal stimulus, it should be mentioned how a struggling young barrister, in a match with some twenty-five runs to his credit and fifty more to get to win, made friends with the last wicket in a truly sporting, happy partnership as they knocked off the runs together. But who was this last man to go in? A little local solicitor, who, captivated by his companion in arms, sent him brief after brief and helped him effectively up the first steps of the ladder to fame! Such things are lost to English life, all because of new seed and heavy rollers, blindness of mind, and 'the desire for more.'

Now and again, of course, the clouds intervene and restore with interest the old-fashioned wicket. At Lord's, if the pitch is sticky, the modern bowling is difficult enough to please anybody. Some 15,000 people who, on that Saturday in 1910, behaved in their excitement like one big lunatic, will never forget the amazingly dramatic fourth innings when a powerful Harrow side, who had scored well over 200 in their first attempt, were helpless before Fowler's superb bowling and dismissed for 45—9 short of the Eton total. I must refer my readers to the *Eton Chronicle* for the facts. No

ordinary penman could picture that scene—a Cabinet Minister weeping, laughing, and dancing on a Harrow flag ; portly cits. in Bond Street yelling the news to strangers with the light blue ribbon on them who had quitted the ground in despair an hour before. Such were the English just before the Great War ! It should be remembered that the delirium of the Etonians was stirred by the alarming fact that they had not won a match since 1900, and it was felt that if another defeat ensued, which on Friday night seemed absolutely certain, 'something would have to be done.' In that same year, I have been told, the War Office took in hand the question of an expeditionary force being equipped for fighting in Belgium. It was the last year, I should say, in which the old antagonism was rekindled to something of its pristine vigour ; and it is perhaps a necessity for the combative instinct latent in the peace-loving Briton to have some such outlet.

Anyhow, I maintain that if the M.C.C. would take the lead in experimenting on the scientific treatment of turf, cricket might very probably become once again a thoroughly healthy and joyous recreation. In any case, no other remedy has ever been suggested which does more than 'skim and film the ulcerous place' ; and if this remedy is sensible, why is it not tried ?

EDWARD LYTTTELTON.

(To be continued.)

SPEED.

La Rapidité, voilà le rêve de notre Siècle.

MILLENNIUMS loitered on their way,
And Time's grey wings seem'd furled,
While Nature without haste or stay
Peopled the nascent world,

Till monsters waddled on the land
Or wallowed in the sea,
And pterodactyls aeroplan'd
On broad vans lazily.

The heavy-gaited tortoise slept
A thousand winters through,
And giant efts by inches crept
Each hour a mile or two.

By tedious steps through cycles slow
From ape advanced to man,
The cavern dweller with his bow
Our wondrous race began.

The calm Greek in his leisured home
Wrought works the Gods might claim,
And wise unhurrying royal Rome
Did deeds beyond all fame.

But now our dream is speed, and speed :
With truth the mocker sings
That Whirl is lord and king indeed
And ousts all godlike things.¹

'Faster and faster' still we cry,
No matter what the goal :
We hurry, hurry until we die,
Nor once possess our soul.

C. R. HAINES.

¹ Δῖνος βασιλεύει τὸν Δῖ' ἐξηλακώς—Aristophanes.

ADVENTURES IN PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE.

BY BENNET COPPLESTONE (F. HARCOURT KITCHIN).

V. MOBERLY BELL AS CONSPIRATOR.

THE sight of Moberly Bell in the rôle of conspirator during those weeks of January and February, 1908, is among my most delectable remembrances. He entered so thoroughly into the spirit of the game and enjoyed every minute of it so whole-heartedly. His interview with Lord Northcliffe on or about January 15 was kept the closest of secrets. Some days later Lord Northcliffe desired a second meeting with Bell, and was greatly troubled how to bring it about without attracting attention to himself. The first meeting, as I have told, was contrived by H. E. Hooper. Lord Northcliffe telephoned to Mrs. Bell, seeking her aid, and she communicated with her husband at *The Times* office in Arabic. Gorgeous! Bell was chuckling to himself when I next saw him. 'You wouldn't think,' said he, 'that I have been carrying on negotiations in Arabic! I was doing it only this morning.' Lord Northcliffe's name was never mentioned between us, and I am told that it was never mentioned at Bell's house in Park Crescent. To me Bell spoke of 'Him' or 'He.' I was not supposed to know who 'He' or 'Him' was, and I pretended not to know. Then when Lord Northcliffe had skipped back to France to be out of the way, and Bell and 'He' had a regular hour for calling one another by the long-distance wire to Boulogne, the game became more pleasing than ever. While these talks were going on—remember that Bell all this while, Bell the publicly superseded employee, remained at his desk in the Manager's Room at Printing House Square—while these talks were going on Bell would shut his door. One really cannot conduct a first-class conspiracy with the door open! So I felt, too, and when I visited him, which was very often, we always closed that door which for years had been accustomed to stand open. I am glad that Bell did not equip himself with the wide-brimmed hat and sombre cloak of a stage conspirator, and insist upon a like costume for me, though he, with his great head and curved beak, would have become it mightily.

The end of the first stage in the battle against the Walters and their nominee, Arthur Pearson, was marked by a notice which Bell felt strong enough to insert in *The Times* of January 18. He seized the opportunity afforded by a request from the Court of Chancery to make the legal position clear. The Pearson announcement of January 7, 1908, inserted by the Walters behind Bell's back, had approached contempt of Court, seeing that the manner and conditions of sale of the property of *The Times* partnership rested not with the Governing Proprietor but with Mr. Justice Warrington of the Chancery Division. The notice of January 18, carefully drawn up, though in clumsy 'official English,' was intended to intimate to all whom it might concern that the last word in the purchase of *The Times* would not be spoken by Mr. Pearson and his supporters. It ran as follows :

As some misapprehension would appear to have arisen in reference to the statement as to the future conduct of *The Times*, inserted in our issue of January 7th, we desire to call attention to the fact that such statement referred only to certain negotiations as being in progress ; and further to state, as the fact is, that no sale of *The Times* has yet been effected, nor has any decision been arrived at as to the mode or terms of any such sale.

By this time the Godfrey Walter-Arthur Pearson combination had been cut out and isolated by that bold corsair Bell, and Mr. Walter, the Governing Proprietor, was in process of being detached from them and brought over to Moberly Bell's side. He was not told with whom Bell was working, he was merely informed that the Pearson project could not succeed, seeing that Moberly Bell purposed to buy *The Times* himself with resources which had been placed at his disposal. Mr. Walter, as I have explained, had been drawn unwittingly into the Pearson confederacy, and was most uneasy about it ; now that he had come again under the domination of the supremely confident Moberly Bell he had no fight left in him. He must have been conscious that between his brother Godfrey on the one hand and the publicly insulted Bell upon the other he was in an ambiguous position. He was a kindly gentleman who had been induced to join in a business he did not really like, and was not, I believe, sorry that Bell should be set upon dragging him out again.

Bell at this time in his attitude towards Mr. Walter was greatly influenced by Lord Northcliffe. It is easy to comprehend the view

of Lord Northcliffe. He cared not a straw for Godfrey Walter, and was willing that he should disappear from Printing House Square—especially as his printing business was going to be abolished—but he did most strongly desire to keep on friendly terms with Mr. Walter. He wanted the Walter name, for all it might still be worth as a token of continuity and independence, to be associated with *The Times* in the chairmanship of the new company. It was of the highest importance, in order to avoid competition, that his own name should be kept out, and that the public should have no knowledge of the identity of the actual purchasers. His purpose was to buy out the old partners in the name of Moberly Bell, and to set up a company with Mr. Walter as chairman and with the leading members of *The Times* staff as directors. His interests would then be held by nominees and there would not, so far as the public knew, be a trace of Northcliffe or Kennedy Jones about *The Times* Publishing Company Limited. So far he had pursued the policy of camouflage with striking success. There had inevitably been some slight gossip associating his name with the pending sale of the copyright in *The Times*, yet no substance upon which gossip could feed. At this time I heard more than one man, closely connected with the Northcliffe papers, stoutly deny that the Chief—as he delighted to be called—would consent to touch *The Times* at any price, and in my character as conspirator I scoffed at the notion that *The Times* would have anything to do with Lord Northcliffe.

There now appeared upon the stage a new actor, General John Barton Sterling, an old friend of Bell and a substantial partner in the proprietorship of *The Times*. General Sterling owned one thirty-second part. It will be understood that under the order for sale the disposition of the property of the partners rested with the Court, and that no outsiders could put forward any scheme of purchase except through one or other of the partners. Moberly Bell, who had agreed the terms of purchase with Lord Northcliffe, now secured the concurrence of General Sterling and entered with him into a legal contract to buy out the interests of the partners in the copyright and the interests of the Walters in their printing business. It was further agreed to lease the buildings from the Walters on specific terms. The interesting feature of this Bell-Sterling contract, which was signed on February 11, 1908—just five weeks after the Pearson announcement had been given to the world—is that its terms were incorporated into the Memorandum

and Articles of Association of *The Times* Publishing Company Ltd. without any alteration of substance. The details had been so carefully worked out in the conversations between Moberly Bell and Lord Northcliffe, and in correspondence through H. E. Hooper or W. M. Jackson (of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica'), that no subsequent alteration became necessary. And this is the more remarkable since the Bell-Sterling agreement planned out the disposal both of the interests of the partners in *The Times* as a newspaper and of the interests of the Walters in the buildings and in their printing business. The Walter brothers, when the battle drew to an end, had the good sense to accept the accomplished facts and to take what they could get.

Under the Bell-Sterling contract Moberly Bell agreed to buy out the partners in *The Times* for £320,000—in cash or in First Preference shares in the new company at their option—to provide at least £100,000 for working capital, to lease the Printing House Square and Playhouse Yard buildings from the Walters at an annual rental of £15,000, and to compensate the Walters for the loss of their printing business by issuing to them £150,000 in Seven per cent. Second Preference shares. Some years later these Second Preference shares, on which no dividend had been paid, were changed into Ordinary shares. They turned out to be an easy and indeed exceedingly cheap means of getting rid of the perpetual printing contract which had so burdened the old *Times*.

The story of that £320,000, the price at which Moberly Bell contracted with General Sterling to buy out the partners, is an attractive one; it revealed that strange creature Lord Northcliffe as a man of generous, even chivalrous, instincts. The nobility of the gesture with which he handed over that large sum of money to Moberly Bell won his heart, and won mine, too, as a devoted friend of Bell. First, in order to make definite the contract with General Sterling, a stake of £32,000—10 per cent. of the purchase consideration—was deposited with the London and County Bank in the joint names of Bell and Sterling. Then, in order that Bell might be in a position to pay into Court the whole purchase money, if required to do so, the full sum—£320,000 in addition to the deposit of £32,000—was entrusted to him.

'Would you call me a rich man?' asked Bell one morning as I entered his room. He was smiling all over his face and half-way down his back, and looking younger than I had seen him for many months past.

'If I may judge by those securities of yours which you asked me to vet,' replied I, 'I should certainly not call you rich.'

Bell grinned. 'I am extremely rich,' he said. 'There are lying on deposit at the Bank of England at this moment 320,000 golden sovereigns in my name, in my sole name. I could go down with a sack, draw all that money out, and bolt with it. What do you think of that?'

'I think,' replied I, 'that someone, shall we say "He," is convinced that you are an honest man.'

'Yes,' returned Bell, his fine face glowing. 'He is a splendid fellow. He insisted upon depositing the money in my sole name.'

Afterwards Lord Northcliffe told me how, and why, he had determined to offer this signal mark of his confidence in Moberly Bell, in defiance of his own solicitors. The obvious and proper course would have been to deposit the purchase-money in the joint names of Bell and of some representative of Lord Northcliffe. 'No,' said Lord Northcliffe, 'I would not do that. F——, my solicitors, said that I was mad. I wanted to please old Bell and to show that I, at any rate, believed in him. He made all sorts of conditions for *The Times* and for the staff, yet he made no conditions for himself. So I decided to make him the first Managing Director, and to hand over the whole purchase-money to him. It was the least that I could do.'

So for several weeks Bell sat in Printing House Square the possessor, as sole trustee, of his 320,000 golden sovereigns, and I, who know how deeply Lord Northcliffe's action gratified my dear friend, lay this story as an imperishable wreath upon Lord Northcliffe's grave. Afterwards he did many things which made the old guard of *The Times* lament bitterly that he had ever entered upon control; I lamented with them. Yet of the man himself I remember just this: at a time when Moberly Bell had been cut to the heart and betrayed by those whom he trusted, Lord Northcliffe, by this chivalrous gesture of complete confidence, poured kindly oil upon Bell's wounds.

'Why £320,000?' I asked of Bell. 'How did you arrive at that sum?'

'It sounded a nice round figure,' replied Bell. 'He did not want to pay more than he could help, and felt sure that Pearson would not be able to raise anything approaching that sum in cash. He is also going to lay down new printing plant and has

undertaken to put up at least £100,000 for working capital. What is the matter with £320,000 ?

'It is a very good bargain for "Him,"' I said, 'especially if most of the partners take First Preference shares, and he gets the greater part of his cash returned to him.'

The precise number of thousands—320—was chosen because the partnership interests were divided into thirty-seconds, and could be apportioned readily in terms of this purchase-money.

Moberly Bell did not greatly concern himself with the financial side of the contract ; that was Lord Northcliffe's business. What did trouble him then and afterwards was how to lay down some kind of editorial Magna Carta which would prevent *The Times* from being turned into a threepenny edition of the *Daily Mail*. He was in the position of our British forbears, who called in the Saxons to save them from Danish freebooters. He wanted to make terms so that the Saxons, after disposing of the Danes, should not proceed to eat up the indigenous British. Most of Bell's conversations with Lord Northcliffe ranged round this problem of security for the editorial side to carry on *The Times* upon the old traditional lines. He was prepared to agree to many reforms in detail, especially on the side of the display and make-up of the news columns, though he held that reforms, however desirable in themselves, should be introduced very gradually and sparingly. He was afraid lest a vigorous and highly modern Lord Northcliffe should 'reform' the old *Times* so drastically that it would become another paper altogether. In his deep anxiety, both for the old newspaper of his mature affections and for the prerogatives of the Editor and his Assistants, he sought to tie Lord Northcliffe down to a definite undertaking to confine his energies to the business side—the circulation, advertisements, and printing—and to keep his restless fingers off the Editor's Room. A formula, designed to be a charter of editorial continuity, was drawn up between Bell and Lord Northcliffe, and embodied as an Article, first in the Bell-Sterling contract, and afterwards in the Memorandum of Association of *The Times* Publishing Company Limited. It ran as follows :

'It shall be the fundamental principle of the Company that the efficiency, reputation, and character of *The Times* newspaper shall, as far as possible, be maintained at its present high standard, and that on all existing political questions the independent attitude of the paper shall be maintained as heretofore.'

Bell tried to do more than secure the insertion of this piously futile Article. It was arranged that the directors of the new company should all be members of the staff of *The Times*, Mr. Walter as chairman being deemed to be a member of the staff. Of course, these directors could have little or no real power. Behind them would stand Lord Northcliffe and his associates, holding through their nominees the bulk of the Ordinary (controlling) shares, and all powerful in the determination of policy, both managerial and editorial. Nevertheless, so long as the Old Guard survived—those who formed the first Board—they would have considerable influence in keeping Lord Northcliffe to the spirit and letter of the editorial charter. It never entered Bell's head—it would have seemed too improbable—that in little more than four years the whole Board, as constituted in 1908, would have been removed by death and retirement. By the end of 1912 there was no Old Guard; all had gone, and there was no one left capable of putting up effective opposition to Lord Northcliffe whatever he might choose to do.

None need question Lord Northcliffe's sincerity at the time when he agreed with Bell upon the terms of the editorial charter. He was then full of apprehensions concerning the future of *The Times*. He did not pretend to understand it or its readers. He saw clearly what was needed to be done on the side of management—on this side he was the greatest expert living—but the editorial conduct of a newspaper like *The Times* was outside the range of his experience. He told me himself most positively that he did not wish to interfere. 'I shall leave the Editor unrestricted control,' said he, 'unless he should—which is quite incredible—fail to warn the British people of the coming German peril. I insist upon that duty being discharged. Apart from Germany the Editor is free to take any line of policy which commends itself to him.' Years before the war the imminence of the German Peril was an obsession of Lord Northcliffe, and no one can say now that he was wrong in employing his newspapers to warn the British people against it.

Moberly Bell tried to get Lord Northcliffe's acceptance to a more explicit charter than that which has been quoted above. He wished to secure, in unmistakable terms, a definition of what was meant by the maintenance of the 'efficiency, reputation, and character' of *The Times*. In a letter dated February 6—five days before the date of signing the Bell-Sterling contract—he recapitulated the points upon which he had received verbal

assurances from Lord Northcliffe, and concerning which he desired written confirmation. I do not think that he got that written confirmation. This letter is of much interest as revealing Bell's mind at the time when it was composed.

There are other assurances which it is more difficult to make specific. They are assurances which I have made to colleagues and shareholders as to the future conduct of the paper referred to in Article 8 [quoted above] of the agreement with General Sterling, and I should like to be assured that I have so far as possible interpreted correctly . . . 's [Northcliffe's] intentions.

The maintenance of the efficiency, reputation, and character of *The Times* I understand among other things to imply :

(a) The main changes will be in matters relating to the mechanical production of the paper.

(b) That changes will be made in the arrangement and get up of the paper, but that in other respects the tendency will be to fuller and more complete reports.

(c) That the paper shall remain at 3d. and shall be a 24pp. paper.

(d) That the staff shall be under my control, and is to be treated in practically the same way as at present.

(e) That the existing distinction between news and advertisements be strictly maintained.

(f) That the paper shall avoid sensationalism, and appeal to the better educated portion of the public.

On all these points . . . [Northcliffe] has already expressed to me verbally his agreement, but I should like his written confirmation, and I ask his general assurance that in character *The Times* shall be in future as thoroughly independent of party clique and individual interest as it has been in the past.

I will only add that so important do I think it to get over any idea that *The Times* has changed, that I would advocate even avoiding changes that are expedient at first, and to make all visible changes in arrangement, etc., very gradually.

I do not think that Moberly Bell ever received the written confirmation for which he asked. His original letter—which lies before me ; it was forwarded to Lord Northcliffe through a third party—concludes with this sentence : ' This letter returned signed as approved would perhaps be the simplest form of acknowledgement.' There is no such notification of approval upon the letter, though one may have been sent separately. If it had been, however, I should probably have heard of it.

What I have given shows, at least, the understanding which Bell thought had been arrived at between himself and Lord Northcliffe, and which he expected the new proprietor to carry out. It was no fault of his that the editorial charter, both written and verbal, proved to be illusory. There is no possible means of tying down the proprietor of a newspaper to conduct it in the future on prescribed lines. Whatever conditions may be embodied in a Memorandum of Association, in preliminary contracts, or in letters, no legal power can exist in anyone to enforce them. And to a very large extent their observance must be a matter of individual opinion. A great many of the changes introduced by Lord Northcliffe, during his ten years of unrestricted control—after the disappearance of the Old Guard—were no doubt, in his view, calculated to enhance the 'efficiency, reputation, and character' of *The Times*. Others, more especially the survivors of the Old Guard, might hold opposite views, and hold them violently. There was no remedy. Moberly Bell might enter into a contract to sell the body of *The Times*, but it was not within his power, or within the power of anyone, to enter into a contract whereby its spirit, as he understood it, might be preserved.

We have now arrived at a stage in my narrative at which it is necessary to introduce what Bell and I called the 'German Syndicate.' We became conscious about the end of January that there were more than two Richmonds in the field contesting for the future possession of *The Times*. Until this new competitor emerged, the pending fight before the Court of Chancery was confined to Mr. Arthur Pearson, backed by Godfrey Walter, and Lord Northcliffe, backed by Moberly Bell. Then we learned that a group of partners had entered into negotiations with one or two wealthy men, interested in the maintenance of Free Trade, to purchase *The Times*, and to make a change in the political policy of the paper. Since Mr. Chamberlain came forward in 1903 with his campaign in favour of Imperial Preference, the Editor of *The Times* had strongly supported him. The Unionist Party was still acutely divided on Fiscal Policy, and the Free Traders, since they had lost the support of the *Standard*, sought to control a leading daily newspaper in London. The order for sale of *The Times* gave them an opportunity. There is no reason to doubt that the partners and outside backers who favoured this project were genuinely patriotic people—I am not going to give any names—but British patriotism in 1908 was vastly less sensitive

than it became in 1914. Money owned by anglicised Germans was associated with a good many British enterprises then, and we were informed that the advocates of a Free Trade *Times* were not too proud to accept Anglo-German help if it would further their designs. The project might have grown into a serious menace to the continued existence of *The Times*—conceive the fate which would have befallen the newspaper at the outbreak of war if German names had figured among those of its proprietors!—it might have become a menace but for the action of Sir Ernest Cassel. He was privately and informally invited to interest himself and his associates in the scheme, and he refused point blank to have anything to do with it. From that moment the so-called 'German Syndicate' could not command a sufficient amount of hard cash to contend pound for pound against Lord Northcliffe's millions. They fell back on an offer of shares in a new company—to own *The Times*—and dropped into the Pearson category of those who wanted to buy yet had not the wherewithal to purchase in cash.

We obtained a grip upon the operations of this Syndicate by one of those happy accidents which are more common in human affairs than even novelists dare to assume. If I were writing fiction I should not venture to invent the story of the Syndicate's approach to me, of all people, as their predesigned supporter within *The Times* office. They had already provided themselves with an Editor, should their scheme come to fruition, and they looked about for someone on the Management side who would be able to command support among the staff of *The Times*. They were so good, and also so extremely foolish, as to hit upon me. One day I received a long communication from a firm who were representing the 'German Syndicate.' This letter began by informing me that a group of partners and their backers had decided to purchase *The Times* and would most certainly succeed in doing so; let there be no doubt about that. They were to be the winners in the great game of competition, and if I wanted to be on the winning side I had better join with them at once. As an inducement to join I was, in rather truculent language, offered an important position under the new proprietorship of the Syndicate.

I read this letter with feelings of considerable amusement. It imported an element of humour into what was rather a grim business for every old member of *The Times* staff. No man who

has not been a prominent member of a newspaper staff at a time of sale can conceive what it feels like to be bought and sold as if one were part of the office furniture. I had reconciled myself to be bought, as an animate part of the business, by Lord Northcliffe, but the notion of being thought purchasable by an opposition show amused me much more than it flattered my self-respect. This was the first occasion within my experience upon which anybody had tried to bribe me, and I was pleased to find that it was an experience more humorous than painful. What I did was to stroll over to the Manager's Room and to show my precious letter to Moberly Bell.

'Good,' he said, 'I have heard of these people. Now we have them.'

It was arranged between us that I should reply as if I were prepared to consider the offer upon receipt of further particulars, and to go on asking for further particulars for as long as the representatives of the Syndicate would stand the game of spoof. So I wrote diplomatically, and there followed quite an agreeable little correspondence. I kept the Syndicate dancing to my pipe for some weeks, and Bell saw the whole correspondence. He communicated it to Lord Northcliffe, and the information which I obtained proved to be extremely useful. What is more it confirmed Lord Northcliffe in his determination to buy *The Times* whatever it might cost.

I have referred to Lord Northcliffe's conviction of the German Peril, and to his insistence that all papers under his control should keep that peril steadily before the British public. He now saw himself as the instrument designed by Providence for saving *The Times* from being bought by a 'German Syndicate,' and being turned to the purpose of German war propaganda. His imagination took fire. He pictured himself as an English St. George in shining armour doing battle with a German Dragon for the life of the virtuous maiden about whose waist was girt the label of *The Times* newspaper. Bell encouraged this handsome vision of what was really not a very formidable opponent. Some months later, forgetful or ignorant of the part which I had played in the affair, Lord Northcliffe told me all about it in a coloured version which I found highly entertaining. In his hands the 'German Syndicate' swelled to the dimensions of the Kaiser, and the hidden resources of the German Empire which he, St. George, had brought to naught all by himself. 'I saved *The Times* from the

German Emperor,' he declared solemnly. 'Splendid!' cried I, with enthusiasm. One needs to humour these millionaire newspaper proprietors.

By the middle of February the lists were set, and we knew what proposals for the purchase of *The Times* had been put before the Court of Chancery in the case of *Sibley v. Walter*. They were now three in number: the Pearson scheme, the 'German Syndicate,' and Moberly Bell's contract with General Sterling. So far Moberly Bell was a sure winner. He had already put down £32,000 as a stake for the carrying out of the Sterling contract, and was prepared, as we have seen, to pay into Court at any moment more than the whole of the £320,000 in cash which the contract secured to the partners in *The Times*. The backers of the two competing schemes had little to offer except hypothetical shares in companies still to be formed, and no Court responsible for approving a sale will look at shares when it is offered hard cash. So the Moberly Bell offer, behind which were ranged the unlimited resources of Lord Northcliffe, was certain to receive the 'approbation of the Judge' when the last tussle came. I do not know how far Lord Northcliffe would have gone had competition become acute. I have seen a letter in which he mentioned £360,000 as an outside sum, but this is inconsistent with his own subsequent statement to me that he would have defeated the alleged 'German Syndicate' at any cost. What he most feared was premature publicity, for his chance of buying *The Times* as cheaply as he did was dependent upon keeping the identity of himself as purchaser closely covered up. To all appearances the purchaser was Moberly Bell, who was buying on behalf of himself and the staff of *The Times*. It was obvious that someone with a much deeper purse than managers and editors of newspapers are able to carry about was standing in with Bell, but there was nothing to indicate that this someone was Lord Northcliffe. His newspaper lordship was 'somewhere in France,' resting from business and ostentatiously indifferent to the fate of *The Times*.

Mr. Walter did not know until March 8, nearly a month after the formal signature of the Bell-Sterling contract. He had submitted himself to the personal influence of Moberly Bell, and had accepted Bell's assurance that, whoever might be the purchaser, every care had been taken to provide that *The Times* would be continued upon its old traditional lines. The terms upon which the Walter printing business was to be acquired were communicated

to him as part of the conditions of purchase. Mr. Walter did not give any trouble, and Godfrey Walter was left to go on with the Pearson scheme until wiped out by the decision of the Judge. It was Lord Northcliffe who instructed Moberly Bell to reveal his identity to Mr. Walter on March 8, a few days before the case came into Court. His message conveying this instruction to Bell shows a nice sense of personal honour. Lord Northcliffe stated that he had returned from the Continent because he had learned directly from an acquaintance of Mr. Walter that he had given assurances that Lord Northcliffe was not the person concerned in the offer that was before the Court of Chancery. Under the circumstances he could no longer allow Mr. Walter to be in ignorance of his identity. He asked, therefore, that Bell should inform Mr. Walter at once and obtain from him a letter intimating his cognisance of the facts. Lord Northcliffe added: 'In the interests of the anonymity of the paper I think that this information should be confined to Mr. Walter only.'

The last proviso was in singular contrast with the rest of the message, which had a ring of genuine good feeling and sincerity. The information was not confined to Mr. Walter only 'in the interests of the anonymity of the paper,' but in the interests of a smooth passage for Lord Northcliffe's purchase scheme. Then, and for years afterwards, he kept himself in the background. All his interests in *The Times* were held by nominees, and he did not appear in person as either a shareholder or as a director until his proprietorship was four years old. His identity as the chief proprietor of *The Times* had by then become so generally known that there was no further purpose to be gained by 'anonymity.'

Lord Northcliffe, in those years of his intellectual prime, fully realised how inconvenient, and even dangerous, newspaper publicity may be to newspaper proprietors. If the Press is to exert any serious influence as the expression of public opinion, then the proprietors of newspapers must resolutely remain anonymous. It is fatal for them to appear openly as the pullers of strings so that the public may dance. One of Lord Northcliffe's strictest rules, when he was at his best, was that his name should never be mentioned in any of his papers unless by his own instructions. He maintained that rule, and his own substantial anonymity, until the year 1915, when, under stress of the excitements of war, he began to come into the open as the controller of opinion in his newspapers. Once the sound rule of personal seclusion had been

broken Lord Northcliffe rushed to the opposite extreme, and in the years of his lamentable decline his name and exploits pervaded his own journals. When I saw this lust for publicity grow upon him—the man whom I had known at his best—it was plain to me that the Northcliffe of 1908 and 1909 no longer existed. The Lord Northcliffe of his latest years was not the Lord Northcliffe whom I had known. He was not the Northcliffe who showed so careful a regard for Mr. Walter's personal honour, nor the Northcliffe who, rejecting the counsels of prudence, handed over £320,000 to Moberly Bell as a plaster for his sore heart.

Cautiously guided and lubricated, the Bell–Sterling contract for the purchase of *The Times* went through the Court on oiled wheels. It secured the approbation of the Judge on March 16, seven days being allowed to the opposition schemes for entering appeals. On the afternoon of the seventh day, March 23, I was standing with Moberly Bell in the Manager's Room at Printing House Square. He was looking at the clock. No notices of appeal had been put in, and as the hands of the clock reached the hour for the rising of Mr. Justice Warrington's Court, Bell pointed dramatically at the clock face.

'Look,' said he. 'It is the hour, and I have bought *The Times*.'

It was true. He had won the game and bought *The Times*, and for a month or two it remained his legal property, held in trust, just as the 320,000 golden sovereigns had been his legal property, held in trust. Then he transferred all his interests to *The Times* Publishing Company Limited, the company which owns *The Times* to-day. The private partnership, after a century of duration, had come to an end, an end so violent that it totally destroyed the Walter control upon which the partnership had originally been founded. Moberly Bell himself, Buckle, all of us, had been sold with the sale of *The Times*. We had ceased at that moment when Bell had pointed to the clock face to serve the Walters; we had become the servants of Lord Northcliffe.

Bell hobbled over to his chair and sat down heavily. He looked up at me and sighed rather wearily. 'The easy part is finished,' said he. 'Now we've got to keep "Him" in order.'

More than once I have been asked what sum precisely Lord Northcliffe and his associates paid in cash for the copyright of *The Times* and for all that pertained to it. He did not buy the buildings, and his issue of Second Preference shares in the new

company to the Walter owners of the printing business and out-of-date plant was a measure of compensation to them rather than a purchase in any business sense. The Walter brothers were given £150,000 in these Second Preference shares, though their plant was valued at little more than £8000.

In so far as I am able to ascertain the purchase of *The Times* cost Lord Northcliffe, and those who stood in with him, just £300,000 in cash. For that sum he bought out the partners who did not accept First Preference shares, he provided the £100,000 of working capital in accordance with the Bell-Sterling contract (an investment which gave 'control' in Ordinary shares), and he met the expenses of the proceedings in Court and of the formation of the company. At the beginning Lord Northcliffe's own interest was 51 per cent.; later on he bought out his associates and others, so that at his death practically the whole of the Ordinary (controlling) shares were owned by him. With these later developments I am not concerned. The sum deposited for buying out the former partners was that £320,000 of which the temporary sole possession gave so much gratification to Moberly Bell. Upwards of fifty of the partners took First Preference shares, the remainder elected to be paid off in cash. About £140,000 of these First Preference shares were allotted to former partners, so that the balance of the £320,000—£180,000—had to be applied to paying off the remainder, who thus ceased to have any further connexion with *The Times*. That process accounts for £180,000 of Northcliffe cash. Then there was the £100,000 of working capital, making the draught on cash £280,000. If we allow £20,000 for expenses and put the total of the bill at £300,000, we shall approximate to the truth. *The Times*, at the date when it was purchased for this small sum, had few liabilities of any moment—except its annual subsidy to the Book Club—and few debts. It was not making much money, nor was it losing money at that time. By putting down out of the working capital a new modern printing plant, the Northcliffe proprietors secured to *The Times* the substantial margin between the economic costs of printing the paper and the old charges levied under the Walter printing contract. Even Bell, who had become sceptical about the earning power of *The Times*, when it had not an 'Encyclopaedia' to subsidise it or a Book Club to attract subscribers, even Bell gasped when we worked out the final figures together. 'What a bargain!' exclaimed he. It was. About the biggest bargain

in newspaper purchase—when one considers that a first-class newspaper has intellectual and moral values transcending those measurable by figures—about the biggest bargain which the modern Fleet Street has ever heard of.

The formation of *The Times* Publishing Company Ltd. proceeded smoothly. The Court in April confirmed the Bell-Sterling contract, under which Moberly Bell was the nominal purchaser, Bell assigned all his interests in this contract to the Company, the Walter brothers accepted the terms offered to them, and *The Times*, both as a newspaper and a printing business, was duly incorporated. After nearly a century of vicissitudes, of success, and of failure, the old partnership, the Walter domination, and the Walter printing contract, all had come to an end together. Incorporation, which might have been brought about peaceably ten, or twenty, or thirty years earlier, had been forced upon the Walters by legal process, and they fell with the constitution, which had at long last crashed about their ears. What I have tried to make clear is that the violent breach with the old order, the introduction of a Northcliffe proprietary, was the direct result of the outworn constitution, and not compelled by necessity. It was ultimately forced upon *The Times* by the hesitation of those to whom its destinies had been entrusted. An hereditary monarchy, absolute in principle and conservative in practice, had proved itself incapable of coping with the changeful problems of a newspaper property.

But had the Walters co-operated with Moberly Bell instead of putting upon him a glaring public affront, and so driving him into open war with them, the issue of the proceedings in the Court of Chancery might have been very different. The hereditary control of the Governing Proprietor must have gone—it was outworn—and the Walter printing business must have gone, but new working capital, for lack of which *The Times* was perishing, might have been introduced without bringing with it a complete alien control. The figures which I have given show how relatively small was the sum needed to buy out those of the old partners who desired to go, and to provide capital sufficient to re-equip the newspaper as a going concern. I do not blame Moberly Bell for the course which he took, with all its potential dangers. Time was against him. He was confronted with the possibility of a Pearson purchase, which must have been disastrous to *The Times* and to all who served *The Times*. At all hazards he had to defeat

the Pearson combination. Almost at any moment after the announcement of January 7, 1908, which declared war upon him and upon his colleagues, the Pearson scheme might have been laid before the Court of Chancery for its approval. He must, if it were to be defeated, have a strong alternative ready within the shortest time available. He had it ready within a fortnight. It was an astonishing feat for a man who had been cut off and abandoned by his nominal employer, though he had never been formally dismissed. Looking back now after all these years, I do not see how Moberly Bell could have declined to take the hand which Lord Northcliffe stretched out to him. I am quite certain that he did not give his powerful assistance to Lord Northcliffe in order to secure his own brief future. Lord Northcliffe himself was so impressed by Bell's disinterested devotion to *The Times* and to the colleagues who trusted him as their champion, that he could not conceal his admiration. Again and again he has told me how different was the Bell whom he found from the Bell whom he expected to find. I was at Moberly Bell's side almost every day all through those months of January, February, and March, and for fifteen months thereafter I was his closest of fellow workers on the management side. His one thought up to the moment of sale to himself was always how he could save *The Times* from the Pearson menace, and from the Walter control which he had come profoundly to distrust. After the sale his one thought always was how he should save the soul of *The Times*, and the colleagues who were the guardians of that soul, from the dangerous purchaser whom he had put in possession of the body and soul of *The Times*. The responsibility for his own actions lay heavy upon him and, beyond doubt, gravely shortened his life. Yet if those early days of 1908 had to be lived through again—with the knowledge which we had then, not with the knowledge which I have now—I think that Bell would have done again what he did then, and that I should have helped him again as I helped him then.

A few months since, in order that I might refresh my memory of those events of sixteen years ago, I turned up the official file of *The Times* Publishing Company Limited which reposes in the Companies' Registry. And as I went through the documents I pictured to myself the bewilderment of an historian—say of a hundred years hence—who sought from these 'original records'

to compile a history of the sale of *The Times* in the early months of 1908. He would find the Bell-Sterling contract and the deed under which Moberly Bell assigned his interests in that contract to the Company, but he would be quite incapable of discovering by whom, and for what consideration, *The Times* had been purchased. The documents indicate, as they were artfully designed to indicate, that *The Times* was bought by Moberly Bell and was transferred to a company which had, as directors, prominent members of the staff of *The Times*, with Mr. Walter as chairman. Capital was clearly introduced by someone, but there is no vestige of evidence whereby that someone may be identified. A study of the shareholders' lists would convey nothing. There is scarcely anyone living now, except the firm of solicitors who prepared those documents and the writer of this narrative, who is able to penetrate below the surface of that official file. I should like to read the story which the historian of the future would make out of it if all copies of what is here written had been destroyed and he had nothing except the file to guide him.

The original Board consisted of Mr. Walter, chairman; Moberly Bell, managing director; G. E. Buckle; Valentine Chirol; and W. F. Monypenny. Though Monypenny was not on the staff of *The Times* itself, he was employed by *The Times* in preparing the 'Life of Disraeli,' which was afterwards completed by Buckle. This was not the dummy Board which it appeared to be. Though the members of it could not control Lord Northcliffe, they could exercise great influence over him and, in an emergency, put in operation checks which it would not be easy for him to overcome. He dared not impose upon this original Board of well-known men any course which would have compelled them to resign in a body rather than have accepted. So long as this Board remained—it was unhappily not for very long—the new Chief Proprietor could not have things all his own impetuous way. He was controlled by the fear of inconvenient publicity. No class of men more timorously dread publicity than newspaper owners and conductors, who live by imposing it upon the rest of mankind.

I have analysed the list of First Preference shareholders. Fifty-six of them, holding about £140,000, were members of the old dissolved partnership who elected to take shares instead of the cash which had been offered to them under the Bell-Sterling contract. Among the others, Sir John Ellerman was a genuine

holder who, having nothing to conceal, did not cover up his identity. Moberly Bell appears (as a nominee), and there were several highly respectable gentlemen with addresses in the City of London who also held blocks of shares as nominees. The purchasers, who were behind Moberly Bell, had to take up the First Preference shares which were not allotted to the old partners, but in order to veil their personalities from the public gaze handed the shares over—in the fashion customary in such cases—to nominees whose names conveyed nothing to anybody. I suppose that this practice is an evasion of the law which requires the names of shareholders to be filed, even of a private limited company as *The Times* was, yet the law does not appear to mind and could scarcely prevent it if it tried. The holders of the Second Preference shares, the Walter brothers, were genuine; they accepted these shares as compensation for the loss of their printing business.

It is when we come to the Ordinary shares, the shares which carried with them the control over the company and *The Times*, that we see Northcliffe camouflage in its richest dress. It did not matter greatly who owned the First or Second Preference shares; it mattered very much indeed who owned—or rather who were put down as owning—the Ordinary controlling shares. The future historian, unfortunate man, will not find a trace of Lord Northcliffe or his associates about the 280,000 of them. In the first instance £270,000 nominal was allotted, of which £100,000 appears in the name of Moberly Bell. He artlessly suggested in one of his letters to 'Dear Blank' that a majority of the Ordinary shares should be vested in his name so that at least he might possess nominal control over *The Times*, but Lord Northcliffe did not regard Bell as a safe repository for even nominal control. Bell might—he was quite capable of doing so in a serious emergency—Bell might have exercised that control in defiance of Lord Northcliffe, and it would have been no easy task for the real Chief Proprietor to have ejected him and remained 'anonymous.' So Bell was allotted no more than £100,000, and Lord Northcliffe's interest of 51 per cent. was assigned to three nominees who had no concern with *The Times* and could be depended upon to carry out their employer's instructions. 'I always hold the controlling interest of 51 per cent. in all my companies,' said Lord Northcliffe to me while explaining his position of supremacy. There were two genuine holders of Ordinary shares in the original file, and two only. One was Mrs. Moberly Bell, who held £5000, and Sir

126 ADVENTURES IN PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE.

John Ellerman, who held £26,500—one tenth part of the purchasers' holdings of £265,000. The other nine-tenths were held on behalf of Lord Northcliffe and his associates in the Harmsworth Press. The amount in cash paid for the whole £265,000 in Ordinary shares was the £100,000 provided as working capital. If we regard the sums paid for First Preference shares as the business investment which it really was—these shares afforded excellent security for the money—the Northcliffe group and Sir John Ellerman bought the control of *The Times*, with all that control involved, for the derisory sum of £100,000 in cash.

(To be continued.)

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE fifth series of Literary Acrostics begins with No. 17, printed below, and will run for four months. Prizes to the value of at least £3 will be awarded to the most successful solvers. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number : the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is first opened.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 13.

(The First of the Series.)

'The curfew — the — of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.'

1. 'Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through — and thin.'
2. 'As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted —.'
3. 'Man wants but — here below,
Nor wants that — long.'
4. ' The poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A — habitation and a name.'
5. 'The feast of reason and the flow of —.'

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed above 'Book Notes' on a later page.

4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.

5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.

6. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.

7. Answers to Acrostic No. 17 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than July 21.

PROEM : Wordsworth, *She was a Phantom of Delight*.

LIGHTS :

ANSWER TO NO. 16.

1. P	eriwig'	D
2. H	op	E
3. A	nniba	L
4. N	uleen	I
5. T	entin	G
6. O	at	H
7. M	aro	T

1. Stevenson, *Ticonderoga*, ii.

2. Kingsley, *The Water-Babies*, ch. 7.

3. G. Eliot, *The Spanish Gypsy*, book 1.

4. Mrs. Browning, *A Romance of the Ganges*, xx.

5. W. Morris, *News from Nowhere*, ch. 24.

6. Tennyson, *The Lotos-Eaters : Choric Song*, viii.

7. Longfellow, *Michael Angelo*, Part First, v.

Acrostic No. 15 ('Mighty Seaman') : Two hundred and four solvers sent in their answers ; of these, 33 were correct, 165 were incorrect, and 6 did not conform to the rules. The third and sixth lights were the hardest, and an unexpected number of solvers did not know the quotation from Macaulay's 'Lays.'

The first correct answer that was opened came from 'Elmstone,' Captain C. W. Firebrace, Elmstone Court, Preston, Canterbury ; he is entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

A new series of acrostics begins this month, and the Acrostic Editor would request solvers to read the rules carefully. In substance they are the same as before, but the old rule 4 has been changed into the new rules 4 and 5, in the hope that its meaning may be quite clear.

Competitors are requested to use no paper-fasteners, metallic, adhesive, or other, for their coupons.

esting
t the

es on
send

send
tion.
litor,
rrive

Phan-

ch. 7.
ypsy,

of the

where,

aters :

Part

ent in
nform
ected

C. W.
books

ostic

In

been

ning

allic,